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HITLER'S Third Reich

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Hitler and the Occult

Occult theories about the Third Reich have exerted a tremendous fascination since the end of the war. But how much did Hitler believe in the Dark Forces? Or was he simply a man who believed he had been chosen by destiny?



"The Nordic Race has the right to rule the world"

Otto Strasser, 1930

COUNT LUTZ SCHWERIN von Krosigk was a rarity in the Nazi regime: a non-Nazi member of Hitler's 1933 cabinet who survived in his post, minister of finance, until 1945. In his diary he recorded how Heinrich Himmler ordered an astrologer to cast Hitler's horoscope on 30 January 1933, the day he became chancellor. The predictions were widely known among the Nazi hierarchy, and became another straw to be clutched at once the war turned against them. The outbreak of world war had been anticipated to the correct year; great victories would follow until 1941; there would be setbacks in the first half of 1945, but the Führer's career would be crowned by glorious victory in late April 1945. By the time Hitler withdrew to the Berlin bunker, even hardened cynics like Goebbels were quoting the astrologer's predictions. Himmler had Krosigk send him a copy.

MAN OF DESTINY

Hitler did not make a habit of consulting horoscopes. Certain that he had been sent to Germany by the hand of Providence, he did not need to. Hitler's belief in his own destiny was unshakeable, but it was surrounded by some very odd theories picked up in his years of voracious, but unsystematic reading. He speculated about Hans Goldzier's 'earth electricity' creation theory, published by an engineer in Vienna 1905-11, and endorsed the concept of 'Odic force', postulated by Baron Karl von Reichenbach in the mid-nineteenth century. His dabbling in such pseudo-science was typical of his butterfly mind, flitting from subject to subject, remembering astonishing quantities of trivia with which he could bamboozle an audience. However, one theory he did reject was Christianity. As Martin Bormann put it, 'National Socialism and Christianity are irreconcilable': to Hitler Christianity was a Jewish-inspired faith further corrupted by generations of money-grabbing priests.

ANTI-CHRISTIAN

German soldiers swore a personal oath of loyalty to Adolf Hitler, but their belt buckles still proclaimed Gott Mitt Uns. Hitler hoped

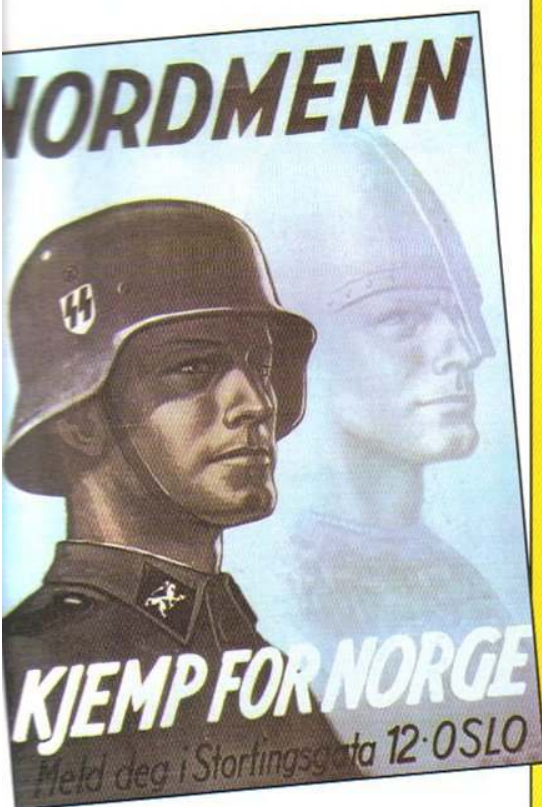


Above: The Nazi propagandists made a great play of Hitler's mystical relationship with the land. But visitors to Berchtesgaden noted that the Führer had no time for nature on his regular walks – though he liked looking at the mountains of the Obersalzberg.

Right: The nearest thing to overt mysticism in Hitler's public behaviour came in the consecration of Nazi banners, when the leader acted as a mystic medium, transmitting the spirit of Nazi martyrs from the 'holy' Blutfahne.

that religion would fade away under Nazi rule, that only older people would continue to go to church and when that generation passed away, religion would be finished. Some Nazis sought to argue that Jesus was not a Jew, but the illegitimate son of a Roman centurion. More popular was an ill-defined belief known as gottgläubig (God Believing) which retained belief in a supreme being, but





Above: The warrior roots of northern peoples were a great feature of Nazi propaganda. This recruiting poster likens the Nordic units of the Waffen SS to the Viking warriors who exploded out of Scandinavia 1,000 years ago.

rejected most Christian teaching, substituting instead the trappings of ancient Pagan rituals—ironic when one considers the Gestapo was busy arresting Freemasons. By 1939 over three million Germans were officially registered as gottgläubig.

ARYAN MYTHOLOGY

The Völkisch groups introduced all manner of largely-bogus folk traditions into the mish-mash of philosophies that contributed to Nazi ideology. Predictably it was the doctrinaire Himmler, with his school master obsessiveness who devoted the most attention to them. Of all the leading Nazis, he was the only one who had spent his early twenties researching ancient German folklore, romanticising the ideal Nordic woman, and all the time remaining a virgin.

Hitler chided Himmler for his devotion to such folkish nonsense, warning him against 'the insinuation of obscure mystical elements' and forbidding the creation of 'so-called Cult Places' which, he correctly predicted, would lead to 'cult games and cult rituals'. But in this regard, Himmler did not follow Hitler's will. The Reichsführer SS had studied comparative religions with rather greater attention and conviction than his Führer. He believed in immortality – but that's another story.

Blood Mystics

Pseudo origins of the 'Aryan Race'

Founded in Munich 1919, the Thule Society, was extremely important in the creation of the Nazis. It was one of a number of right-wing, anti-semitic organisations arising out of a pre-war occult society known as the 'Order of Teutons'. Set up along the lines of Freemasonry, it had a number of levels and was only open to people who could prove a pure Germanic ancestry.

Many Nazi ideas can be traced to the beliefs of the Thule Society. Long before history was recorded, the members believed, an Atlantis-like island called Thule was located somewhere in the northern polar regions, played host to an advanced civilisation of 'Aryan' supermen. Although the culture had been wiped out by an unnamed cataclysm, some of the secrets of the inhabitants had been saved by a group of 'Masters' or 'Ancients'. However, the pure blood of Thule had been adulterated over the centuries by interbreeding with inferior races of mankind – most notably with the Jews

The Thule Society held that the surviving 'Masters' could be contacted by means of secret rituals, but they would only impart their advanced knowledge to people of pure 'Aryan' blood. As a result, the Society's members threw their weight behind a number of racist, right-wing groups in postwar Munich. These were the people who were fighting the Communists – who were seen by Society members as being one and the same as the Jews.

Most evidence points to the fact that by the time that Hitler came to power, he held no brief for the ritual side of the Thule Society. However subsequent Nazi activity shows that he was in complete agreement with its racial beliefs.



Left: Former monk Lanz von Liebenfels founded the 'Order of the New Templars'. In Vienna he published a racist magazine called Ostara, in which many of the more extreme Aryan theories first saw light of day. Hitler is believed to have had a subscription to the magazine in his Vienna days, and may have met von Liebenfels in 1909.

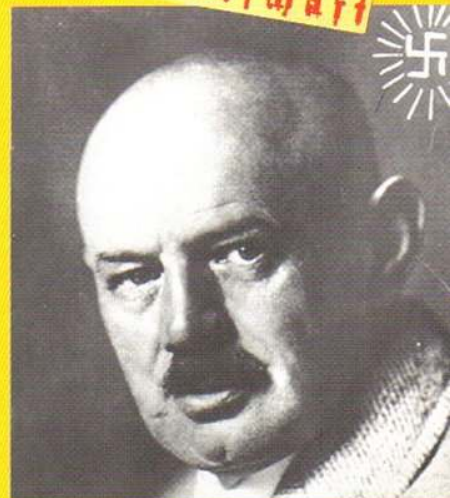
Right: The bookplate of the Thule Society, founded in Munich in 1919.



Below: Railway mechanic Anton Drexler was a well-known Bavarian chauvinist and anti-semitic. One of the founders of the German Worker's Party, it was Drexler who invited Hitler to join the party.



Right: Dietrich Eckart met Adolf Hitler late in 1919. The member of the Thule society was a wealthy publisher and editor of an anti-semitic journal, as well as being an occultist. He was Hitler's first great mentor.



HITLER'S THIRD REICH 3



A member of a German 'Special Action Group' prepares to shoot a Jewish mother and child near Ivanogorod, in the Ukraine.

EINSATZGRUPPEN DEATH SQUADS IN THE EAST

The techniques of mass-murder used in the Holocaust were evolved by mobile killing squads which accompanied the Wehrmacht into Russia.

THE NAME sounds innocuous enough. *Einsatzgruppe*, meaning 'special action groups'. But the special actions the title referred to were mass murders, and their operations marked the opening stages of the planned extermination of Europe's Jews. The *Einsatzgruppen* were the heralds of the Holocaust.

The first *Einsatzgruppen* were formed by Himmler and Heydrich in 1939 to follow German troops into Poland, with

the aim of rounding up Jews and resettling them in ghettos, confiscating Jewish property in the process. In a 21 September briefing by Heydrich to the Army High Command, it was clear that this was only to be a temporary measure, pending the 'final solution' to the Jewish problem.

To minimise the task of rebellion, the SS was assigned to eliminate Poland's leading people including the intelligentsia, clerics, military officers and landowners. The same thing was happening in the Soviet occupied portion of

"New arrivals were made to lie down on top of the layers of corpses. A marksman with a machine pistol walked across the bodies to shoot their next victims in the neck, one after another."

Poland. The infamous Katyn massacre in which as many as 15,000 Polish officers were murdered was carried out by Stalin's secret police, the NKVD.

Einsatzgruppen played no part in the invasion of the west in 1940: it would not be until June 1941 and Operation Barbarossa, that the murder squads hit their full stride.

Selection began in May 1941, when potential members gathered at Pretsch near Leipzig. The RSHA (*Reichssicherheits-hauptamt* or Main State Security Office) personnel department

Death Squad In Action

Rounding up Jews and killing them

According to Professor Otto Ohlendorf, the commander of Einsatzgruppe D, Jews were collected,

"...on the pretext that they were to be resettled. After registration, they were transported to the place of execution – usually an anti-tank ditch or a natural cavity in the ground. In my command, the executions were carried out in a military manner, by firing squads under command. Other commanders insisted that the victims lay down flat on the ground where they were dispatched by a shot through the nape of the neck. I did not approve: since both for the victim and for those who carried out the executions it was an immense psychological burden."

SS Obergruppenführer Jeckeln used a different method for his command in Riga – he called it the 'sardine system'. Victims were lined up in a compact mass by the side of the grave where they were shot by rifles or machine-gun fire. "It had the advantage," Jeckeln later claimed, "of saving space."

Right: On 13 October 1942, German troops accompanied by Ukrainian collaborators arrive in the town of Mizocz, on the border between Poland and the Ukraine, where approximately 1,700 Jews are confined to a ghetto. It soon becomes clear that a liquidation is about to take place, and the ghetto's inhabitants resist fighting a short battle before being overwhelmed.



Above: The next day the inhabitants of Mizocz are rounded up and loaded into trucks. Male survivors of the abortive fight for freedom are separated from their women and children. From Mizocz, the ghetto dwellers are transported to a small ravine in the Sdolbunov Gebeitskommissariat, south of the city of Rovno. There they are told to get down and undress, leaving their valuables behind.

Left: Naked Jewish women, some carrying babies, are driven further down the ravine where they are told to bunch up by their captors. The Germans – and their Ukrainian auxiliaries – wait until their victims reach the bottom of the ravine before opening fire.



Right: Germans search among the bodies of their victims looking for any women or children showing signs of life. These are despatched by a single bullet to the head. The murderers at Mizocz were not members of the SD or the Gestapo: they were Gendarmerie or military policemen. Police battalions were involved in many of the worst massacres on the Eastern Front.



Murder at Lubny

Einsatzgruppe annihilation

To the Chief of the Security Police and Security Service
Berlin, November 12 1941

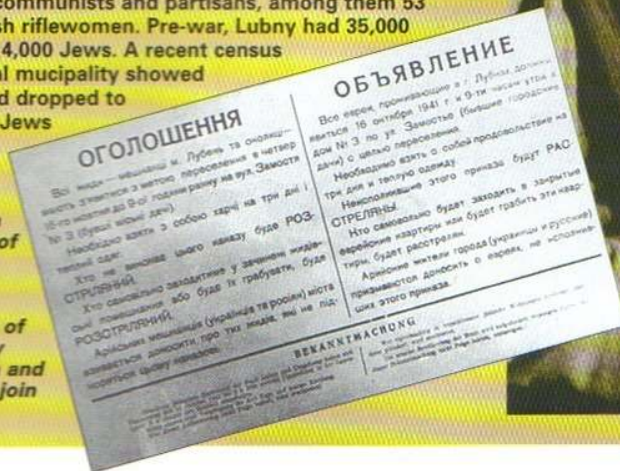
Extract from Operational Situation Report USSR No. 132
Einsatzgruppe C, Dnepropetrovsk

The number of executions carried out by Sonderkommando 4a has increased to 55,432. Among those executed to the date of this report are a small number of political functionaries, active communists, saboteurs etc, but the largest part were Jews. A considerable part were Jewish prisoners of war, handed over by the German Army at Borispol. It should be noted that due largely to the energetic help of the German army authorities these activities were carried out smoothly.

One platoon of SK4a was active at Lubny. Without opposition, it executed 1,363 Jews, communists and partisans, among them 53 POWs and a few Jewish riflewomen. Pre-war, Lubny had 35,000 inhabitants including 14,000 Jews. A recent census undertaken by the local municipality showed that the population had dropped to 20,000, and only 1,500 Jews could be listed.

Right: A notice in Russian and Ukrainian instructing the Jews of Lubny to gather for 'resettlement'.

Far Right: The victims of the massacre at Lubny were women, children and old folks too weak to join the partisans.



supplied members of the Sipo (Sicherheitspolizei or Security Police) and the SD (Sicherheitsdienst or SS Security Service), while a contingent was sent from the Sipo senior commanders school in Berlin, together with 100 Kripo (Kriminal Polizei or plain-clothes detective) cadets. Support staff were drafted in from the SS, while the non-commissioned manpower was mostly made up from companies of the 9th Police Reserve Battalion and from the Waffen SS.

In June 1941, just before the invasion, senior officers in the *Einsatzgruppen* were briefed in person by Himmler and Heydrich. Their task was defined in a memorandum sent by Heydrich, later known as the 'Commissar Order'.

'EXECUTIONS'

"All the following are to be executed:

"Officials of the Comintern; communist politicians in general; top and medium level and radical

Right: German police and Ukrainian militiamen carry out a mass execution of Jews from the village of Chrystynowka

Below right: Einsatzkommando members with their victims. This photo was found on the body of a German officer named Kolba.

lower-level party officials; people's commissars. "Jews in party and state employment; other radical elements (saboteurs, propagandists, snipers, assassins, inflammatory speakers etc)."

A later order dated 12 October provided further details.

"The principal targets of *Einsatzkommando* executions will be: - political functionaries; Jews mistakenly released from POW camps; Jewish sadists and avengers; Jews in general."

Otto Ohlendorf, who commanded *Einsatzgruppe D*, testified at his war crimes trial in 1947:

"The objective was to eliminate racially and politically undesirable elements...The goal was to liberate the army's rear areas by killing Jews, gypsies





Left: The Jews of Lubny were instructed to report to the assembly point at 9.00 am on Thursday 16 October 1941. Since the Soviet winter was on the way, they were told to bring warm clothing as well as enough food to last for three days of travel.

Above left: All 1,500 remaining Jews in Lubny were expected to comply, from the oldest to the youngest, like this little girl wrapped in a shawl. The Germans added a warning that anyone who tried to evade the transportation would be shot.

Above: A member of Sonderkommando 4a, part of Einsatzgruppen C, orders a batch of Jews from Lubny to undress. The piles of clothing in the background belonged to those who had gone before, who were already dead.



Left: Preili, Latvia in 1941. A Russian accused of being a partisan is about to be shot.

and communists".

When the invasion was launched, German forces were accompanied by four Einsatzgruppen. Nominally under army control, these paramilitary units were in fact under the direct command of Reinhard Heydrich and Heinrich Himmler, and operated independently of the military chain of command.

ORGANIZATION

Einsatzgruppe A, commanded by SS-*Standartenführer* Dr Walther Stachlecker, was assigned to Army Group North. It had a strength of about 1,000 men in sub-units *Sonderkommandos* (SK) 1a and 1b, and *Einsatzkommandos* (EK) 1c, 2 and 3. EG-A's main area of operation was in the Baltic states.

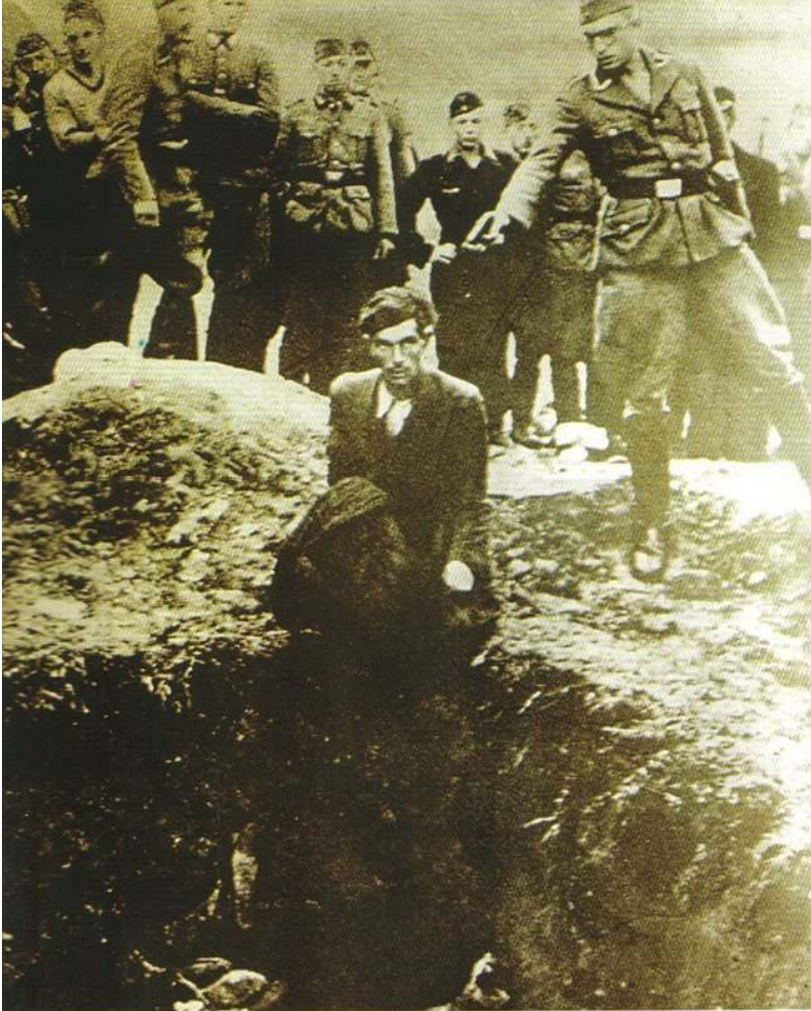
Einsatzgruppe B was attached to Army Group Centre and operated in Byelorussia and on the road to Moscow. It was led by SS-*Brigadeführer* Arthur

Nebe, on detachment from his main job as head of the *Kriminal Polizei*. With a strength of around 650 men, its main subunits were SKs 7a and 7b, and EKs 8 and 9.

Einsatzgruppe C operated in the Northern Ukraine along with Army Group South and was based in Kiev. Its commander was SS *Brigadeführer* Dr Otto Rasch, and its 750 men were split up into SKs 4a and 4b, and EKs 5 and 6. Ernest Biberstein, commander of *Einsatzkommando* 6, was a Protestant pastor with a degree in theology.

Einsatzgruppe D was 600 strong. It was nominally attached to Eleventh Army in Rumania, but after the invasion of the USSR it was given a more independent role in the South Ukraine, Crimea and the Caucasus. EG-D was commanded by SS *Standartenführer* Professor Otto Ohlendorf – who had degrees from three universities and was a Doctor of Jurisprudence. The *Gruppe* comprised SKs 10a and 10b and EKs 11a, 11b and 12.

HITLER'S THIRD REICH 7



Above: Waffen SS soldiers and Reich Labour Service members look on as a member of Einsatzgruppen D prepares to shoot a Ukrainian Jew. The grave half-filled with corpses shows that the 1942 massacre at Vinnitsa has been going on for some time.

Below: Disposing of the bodies was not a problem for the Einsatzgruppen. The murders took place alongside natural cavities or in excavations dug by the victims themselves. Once the holes were full it was simply a matter of bringing in the bulldozers.



Victims were not hard to find. Communist party apparatchiks had not made themselves popular with the Soviet people in the years before the war, and in the early days, at least, the invading Germans were seen as liberators by the ordinary peasants in the Ukraine. Until the SS proved that the German jackboot was even worse than the Soviet version, there was no shortage of people to denounce party members.

KILLING JEWS

But after the first few months the primary target was always the Jew. These too were not hard to find. Most were city dwellers, living by choice in the large urban areas which the primary target for the advancing German armies. Some were obviously Jewish – the more orthodox wore distinctive clothes and spoke a distinctive language. But even those who had been assimilated into the local culture were not safe. They were often denounced by their neighbours, a product of the centuries of anti-Semitism which had afflicted central and eastern Europe.

The *Einsatzgruppen* soon had their techniques down to a fine art, arriving in the tracks of the Wehrmacht's panzers and rounding up their targets in a matter of hours. They had no finer feelings for Jewish women and children – their orders were for total extermination.

Einsatzgruppen were not carrying out their gruesome task alone. Police battalions, regular police and Waffen SS units all carried out mass executions. They were often assisted by local collaborators, who were amongst the most enthusiastic of all the killers. In the 'Gross Aktion', which took place at Kaunas in Lithuania, Lithuanian *Sonderkommandos* killed a large proportion of the 9,200 Jews who were murdered.

Shooting was not an effective method of execution, however, and even Himmler's hardened killers were affected by their work. They drank very heavily, and many became little more

"I saw them do the killing. At 5:00 pm they gave the command to fill the graves – even though screams and groans were still coming from the pits. I saw a boy of around five crawl screaming out from beneath his dead mother's body"

than animals. Himmler had received reports of the deterioration in his racial warriors, but he did not decide to take action until he personally witnessed – and was made ill by – an action by *Einsatzgruppe B* near Minsk.

POISON GAS

Arthur Nebe was tasked with finding a more effective and impersonal means of execution. In a series of experiments, in which he was assisted by former Kripo colleague Dr Widemann, he ruled out explosives. Tests on 25 mentally-ill people from Minsk proved very messy, and not very effective. Widemann suggested using poison gas, with which both men were familiar thanks to pre-war work on the Nazi euthanasia programme. Thirty inmates of a local asylum were locked into a hermetically sealed room into which carbon monoxide from vehicle exhausts was introduced. Two cars proved to be sufficient, killing the victims in minutes.

By the end of 1941 specialised gas vans were being supplied to *Einsatzgruppen*, and gas became the preferred method of execution. The techniques were so effective, in fact, that within a year gas was also being used in the extermination camps being set up in occupied Poland. The Holocaust was now a fact.

RECORDS OF GENOCIDE

Death squad statistics

Just how many people the *Einsatzgruppen* disposed of is difficult to measure. The SS themselves kept detailed records of their activities. According to the RSHA, by 1943 the death toll was 633,300 Jews, and a further 100,000 were slaughtered in the following year. And the records could be amazingly detailed. The Jäger report sent by the commander of Einsatzkommando 3 detailed more than 130,000 murders of men, women and children, committed in Lithuania between July and November 1941.

But the 'official' units were only part of the story. Massacres were also perpetrated by the Waffen SS, in isolated incidences by the Army, and by Ukrainian and Baltic auxiliaries. Above all, around 30 police battalions were involved, some achieving killing rates rivaling those of the Einsatzgruppen. It is estimated that the various mobile killing squads – whose numbers probably never rose above 15,000 or 20,000 actively involved – disposed of more than 1,500,000 people in under four years.



Above: Polish women wait for death in front of German police and Ukrainian collaborators.



Left: Friedrich Jeckeln's police units were responsible for some of the worst massacres in the Ukraine



Above and left: Much of the horror generated by the Einsatzgruppen came from the fact that their victims knew exactly what was happening to them. Waiting their turn to undress (above), they could hear the shots of the executioners, and when their turn came (left) their last sight would have been the bodies of family and friends.

Right: The Jäger report detailed the killing of more than 130,000 people in the Baltic. It ended with the phrase, "Today I can confirm that our objective has been achieved by EK 3. In Lithuania there are no more Jews, apart from Jewish workers and their families".



Even today, half a century after its final dissolution, the name 'Gestapo' remains a byword for cruelty, secrecy and repression.

HITLER'S SECRET police earned such a reputation for evil that the name 'Gestapo' still conjures up images from old war

movies: hatchet-faced men in trenchcoats beating down a door, arresting resistance fighters or shooting escaped prisoners-of-war.

The name has become over-used and devalued. In recent years, individuals and organisations from Peter Mandelson to the gay rights movement have been accused of using 'Gestapo tactics', meaning any kind of aggressive behaviour. Distance has even lent enchantment. The 1980s TV

comedy 'Allo, Allo featured a leatherclad figure of fun: Herr Flick of the Gestapo.

It wasn't so funny in the 1930s. Between Hitler's assumption of power in 1933 and the outbreak of war in 1939 nearly 400,000 Germans were imprisoned for their politics, racial origin or sexual orientation.

The arrest rate soared as war approached: a third of the arrests took place in 1939. Even the pretence of legality had vanished as opponents of the Nazi regime vanished into the concentration camps. By the time Hitler ordered his armies to battle, the secret police was 'disappearing' his internal enemies without trial or conviction.

As the war turned against Germany, so the regime's definition of opposition broadened. A single anti-Nazi remark reported to the Gestapo could get you beaten up, tortured in the cellars or on a one-way journey to Dachau.

BIRTH OF THE GESTAPO

Hermann Goering called the keys to the Prussian Justice building 'the keys to power'. Given charge of the Prussian interior ministry in January 1933, Goering purged the organisation, sacking officials unsympathetic to the Nazis' aims and installing an unsavoury crew of street toughs in their place. SS-Oberführer Kurt Daluegue,

known as 'dummi-dummi' behind his back, was appointed to purge the police of political opponents.

One department in the Berlin police headquarters caught Goering's eye. Headed by 33-year old Rudolf Diels, department 1-A was an intelligence gathering unit established to monitor extremist political groups. Diels was staunchly anti-Communist and concentrated the Prussian police effort on left-wing parties, but he had bulging files on the leading Nazis too. Diels got on famously with Goering and later married the widow of Karl Goering, Hermann's younger brother.

In April 1933 the department



Above: The Paris Gestapo lines up for a group photo in 1943. Uniform was standard for occupied territory; when serving in Germany they normally wore civilian clothing.

Above right: An elderly Jew is harassed by the Gestapo and uniformed Ordnungspolizei. The secret police had almost unlimited powers of arrest, and Jews were primary targets.

Left: When the Gestapo was absorbed into the RSHA, party membership became mandatory. Most Gestapo investigators were given senior SS ranks.

was expanded and the name changed to the *Geheime Staats Polizei*amt, or Gestapa (Secret State Police Office). It was later renamed the *Geheime Staats Polizei*, or Gestapo (Secret State Police). The new unit incorporated the political section of the Kripo (*Kriminal Polizei* – plain clothes detectives) as well as a section devoted to counter-intelligence.

ELIMINATE OPPOSITION

Goering used the police to eliminate the remaining sources of political opposition to the Nazis. On the night of 27 February the Reichstag building was burned down by a young communist, van der Lubbe (or possibly by some SS men from Munich – the truth died with the unfortunate Dutchman, guillotined in 1934). Using the fire as an excuse, Hitler

promulgated 'The Emergency Laws of February 28' which granted sweeping powers to the police. People could be arrested and their homes searched without a warrant. They could be held indefinitely without trial and without recourse to the courts. In one of his last official acts, President Hindenburg signed the decree and the Nazis were given legal authority to jail anyone who dared oppose them.

Goering began with the communists and, it has to be said, their brutal elimination went down well with the conservative establishment in Germany. Meanwhile, Diels and his men were moved into new offices at Prinz Albrechtstrasse 8. This would be the headquarters of the Gestapo, the most feared address in Germany, until the end of the Nazi regime.

However, those who would



use the Gestapo to become the most feared men in Nazi Germany did not yet have anything to do with the organisation.

The first twelve months of Hitler's rule brought few tangible rewards for Heinrich Himmler, commander of the 300 strong SS, or his sinister associate Reinhard Heydrich. Since 1931 Heydrich had been running a small Nazi intelligence-gathering unit from a rented apartment in Munich. In addition to monitoring political opponents, Heydrich spied on other Nazis, especially the SA: a Frankenstein's monster that had grown to more than ten times the size of the German army.

RIVALRY WITH THE SD

Heydrich's SS internal security office was formally established as the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD, or Security Service) in 1933. It grew from a handful of informers to over 100,000 staff during World War II, becoming a key instrument of domestic terror and providing the organisation of the Holocaust.

Himmler controlled much of the German police by the time Goering relinquished control of the Gestapo, on 20 April 1934. The former fighter ace had been appointed *General der Infanterie* in the summer of 1933, and was more interested in the re-establishment of a German air force than running a police force. Although wary of the young Himmler, Goering recognised the bespectacled bureaucrat as an ally against his great party rival, Ernst Röhm and his rowdy SA.

The first step for Himmler would be to decapitate the SA. Curiously, Röhm's open enthusiasm for homosexual orgies had been tolerated by the otherwise prudish Hitler. But when Heydrich provided fabricated evidence of an SA coup d'état in the making, Hitler reacted with startling speed and ruthlessness. While the Führer pounced on the SA in Bavaria, Goering and Goebbels co-ordinated the elimination of the SA in Berlin, settling a number



Above: Gestapo, SA and SD men make a routine identity paper check. The Gestapo kept files on everybody in the country, updated by reports and denunciations from tens of thousands of ordinary Germans, acting as informers.

Left: For a decade, the Gestapo headquarters at Number 8, Prinz Albrecht Strasse was the most feared address in Germany – many taken there were never seen again. Its dungeons remained in use even after Allied bombing.

Below: Reinhard Heydrich (second from right) shows Spanish police through the newly-established Reich Main Security Office. Arthur Nebe, head of the Kriminal Polizei, stands at Heydrich's shoulder.



MASTERS OF TERROR

Movers and shakers in the Gestapo



Above: Gestapo officers conduct a 'Razzia' or raid on a gypsy camp. Gypsies were hated almost as much as the Jews, and tens of thousands perished in the Holocaust.

of party and private scores along the way. The murderous 'Night of the Long Knives' was conducted by SS, SD and Gestapo personnel.

Himmler's control of the Gestapo meant he ran two mutually-competing agencies but they were not brought into a common administrative structure until 1938. In 1934 the SD was still very much the junior security service. Only the Gestapo had the authority to arrest or conduct searches; Heydrich's department was primarily concerned with gathering intelligence. Relations between the SD and Gestapo were not always cordial.

In 1936, the Führer made Himmler Chief of the German Police. Heydrich became head of the *Sicherheitspolizei* or security police, with control of the plain-clothes Kripo and the Gestapo.

'GESTAPO' MÜLLER

Rudolf Diels was replaced by Heinrich Müller, a WWI pilot who had managed the anti-communist desk of the Munich police force during the 1920s. Diels was compensated with the post of Head of Regional Government in Cologne; Goering later made him inland shipping administrator for the Hermann Goering Werke and he survived the war to resume his administrative career in West Germany.

Although not a Nazi – indeed, he had prosecuted Nazis with great fervour in the late 1920s –

Heinrich Müller was an extremely competent opportunist.

He had been co-opted into the security services while Himmler and Heydrich were still based in Munich. It was Müller who had orchestrated the police cover-up of the Geli Raubal affair in 1931.

Müller was an experienced policeman, openly contemptuous of the more ideologically-motivated 'intellectual' types in the SD. Indeed, less than half of the 607 Gestapo officials were members of the SS. By 1939 the Gestapo had a staff of 20,000 but only one in six had joined the SS – until a decree compelled them all to do so.

One aspect of the Nazi secret police apparatus that deserves emphasis is the comparative youth of its leaders. Himmler, Müller and Diels were all in their early thirties when Hitler seized power. Reinhard Heydrich was twenty-nine.

SD TAKES CONTROL

In June 1938 the Gestapo – a government department – was



Left: On 20 April 1934, Hermann Goering hands the Gestapo – until that time, a purely Prussian force – over to Heinrich Himmler. This gave the SS, which already controlled the rest of the police forces in Germany, the final piece in the jigsaw on which the Reichsführer would build his power.

Right: Adolf Eichmann was head of the Jewish office of the Gestapo, and as such was responsible for the detailed planning and execution of the 'Final Solution'.

Below: A meeting in a Munich bierkeller in 1939 unites some of the most powerful people in the Reich, including (from the right) Müller, Heydrich, Himmler, Arthur Nebe and Vienna Gestapo chief Huber.



Below: Heinrich Müller was an experienced Bavarian detective, a cynical pragmatist who replaced Rudolf Diels as head of the Gestapo.

Below: Ernst Kaltenbrunner was an Austrian academic who became head of the RSHA after Heydrich's assassination. He was hanged at Nuremberg.





Left: The Reichstag fire of 27 February 1933 was used by Hitler to force through an enabling act, which was the foundation of his absolute dictatorial powers.

Above: Marinus van der Lubbe, a retarded Dutch labourer, was caught, tried and executed for setting the Reichstag fire. He may have been set up by the Gestapo.



Above: Police procedure in the Third Reich was brutal, as these suspected Communists are discovering. Standard interrogation techniques saw prisoners like these being beaten and tortured for long periods of time.

officially brought under control of the SD – a sub-section of the NSDAP. Like poison ivy, the Nazi Party was intertwining with the tree of state: the two were imperceptibly merging.

It fell to Heinrich 'Gestapo' Müller to organise the next ferocious act of Nazi violence: Kristallnacht. On the night of 9 November, his headquarters signalled Gestapo offices across Germany to seize the archives of synagogues under attack by rioters. The Gestapo men were to liaise with local Orpos (*Ordnungspolizei* or uniformed police) to prevent looting getting out of hand. The Gestapo was also entrusted with arresting as

many as 30,000 well-to-do Jews who would be held for ransom.

In September 1939 Hitler consolidated the entire security and police organisation of the Third Reich. Until his assassination in 1942, Reinhard Heydrich would preside over the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (RSHA, Reich Central Security Office). The RSHA included the Gestapo, Kripo and SD. Amt (Department) IVB4 under Adolf Eichmann was the Gestapo's Jewish Affairs Office, and as such was in overall control of the 'Final Solution'.

Recent research into Gestapo archives reveals an uncomfortable truth. The

Gestapo's role in enforcing Nazi rule in Germany was performed with remarkably few full-time personnel. The eyes and ears of the secret police were the tens of thousands of informants who provided a stream of information. Much of it was gossip and hearsay, the motive personal malice rather than political conviction. Families were divided as children, imbued with the spirit of the Hitler Youth,

informed on their own parents. Small town Gestapo offices were under-staffed so there was seldom time to investigate many reported anti-Nazi statements or actions. In consequence, arrests and punishments were highly arbitrary.

By the time Hitler went to war in 1939, any act of opposition, however trivial, could result in deadly punishment. The Gestapo preyed on human weakness, setting the people to spy on each other, and to offer up those who did not conform. As German armies stormed across Europe, so the Gestapo would extend this technique from France to the heart of Russia.

Beltring 2011



It did not take long for word to get around. Speak out against Hitler, rumour had it, and you got sent to Dachau. Men who had been released from the place dared not talk about what they had endured. If they did, they disappeared, this time for ever.

Dachau

The first concentration camp

The prisoners at Dachau were used as training material by the concentration camp guards, who worked out the techniques of repression that would be used in thousands of camps over the next 12 years.

SHORT, SHARP SHOCK

The price of opposition to the Nazis

It was perhaps the ultimate 'short sharp shock' – several thousand men, typically members of mainstream political organisations before 1933, were sent to Dachau for a few weeks during the mid-1930s. Heads shaved, garbed in thin prison uniforms and brutalised from dawn to dusk, they had only to look at their fellow inmates to realise that if they were held for any length of time they had little chance of survival. The diet bordered on starvation, leaving long-term prisoners suffering from debilitating illnesses.

The torture at Dachau was not only physical. A crucial twist was that no-one knew how long their 'sentence'

would last: prisoners were held at the pleasure of the *Reichsführer*. The guards loved to play mind games, telling inmates their release was imminent, sometimes taking them through a cruel charade in which they prepared for freedom, only to be beaten up and returned to the barrack blocks. By such means the strongest spirits could be broken. The 'lucky' ones, set free before the outbreak of war led to an increased demand for slave labour, returned to their homes only after a vow of silence. This had a powerful coercive influence, as Himmler intended. The fearful silence had more impact on the public than any number of atrocity stories.

MANY of Dachau's inmates did not have the chance to demonstrate that they could keep quiet – like the Communist party members imprisoned at Dachau when it was established in 1933. They were never seen again. Tens of thousands of others would suffer the same fate until the spring of 1945, when Heinrich Himmler ordered the *kommandant* to slaughter the surviving inmates before the US Army arrived on the scene.

Dachau was the first concentration camp to be formally established, and served as a model for the entire concentration camp system. It was there that the first SS camp guards learned their grisly business. Some could not stomach it: Adolf Eichmann, who organised the Holocaust and was later executed in Israel, wangled a transfer to administrative duties in Berlin. It was so much more civilised to murder from the comfort of a desk, rather than amid the squalor of a camp.

Even before Hitler achieved supreme power, the SA had created a number of holding

centres for political opponents. Their enemies, primarily Communists and trade union leaders, were kidnapped and taken to farms or disused factories. A few were murdered, most were beaten up and told it would happen again if they did not cease their opposition.

The moment Hitler became Chancellor, the SA scented blood. A round-up of all old enemies began. But it was a hit and miss business: the SA was never noted for subtlety.

It was Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler who systematised the process. On 22 March 1934 he announced the creation of a new facility at Dachau, near Munich.

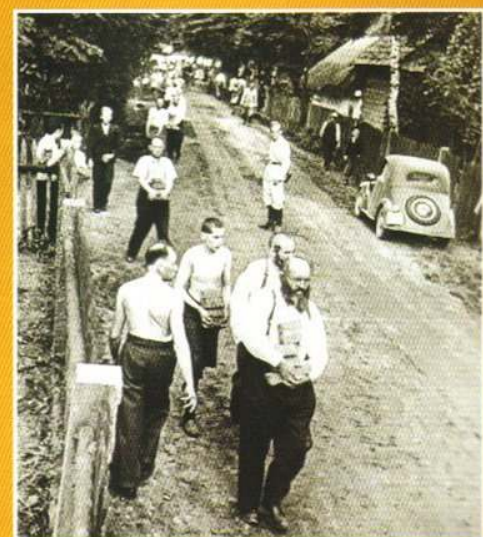
DACHAU SET UP BY SS

There, the local SS had already been using a derelict munitions factory as an improvised prison since the first hours of Hitler's chancellorship. Now it would become an official institution, to keep Communists and other left-wing party members out of circulation. Himmler issued a press release, declaring that Dachau would accommodate up to 5,000 prisoners, held there because the existing judicial



Above: Arrests began the moment the National Socialists came to power, the first victims primarily being people of influence such as opposition politicians and newspapermen.

Right: The first concentration camp inmates were put to hard labour, in the theory that opposition to the Nazi regime could be knocked out of them by brutality.



Above: Dachau inmates manhandle building material out of the camp. At this time, in 1938, most prisoners worked on roads or in quarries.



Above and left: The Nazis took great pains to hide the true nature of their concentration camps. These photos of a sparklingly clean barrack block and showers are from a propaganda booklet published in 1933, which aimed to show that life in places like the SS camp at Dachau – and its SA equivalent at Oranienburg near Berlin – was hard but fair.



Above: The medical facility, which prisoners rarely saw (unless, of course, they were being used as guinea pigs in medical experiments)



Above: Massive soup ovens were used to prepare the meagre fare on which the camp inmates were supposed to survive.



machinery could not cope with so many political arrests and because the regime simply did not contemplate the release of Communist officials.

Obersturmführer Hilmar Wackerle was appointed *kommandant* and set to work with a will. Unfortunately for him, although arbitrary arrest and imprisonment was already becoming widespread under the Nazis, the last vestiges of legality had yet to be swept away. The Bavarian state authorities balked at Wackerle executing several

Left: Dachau set the standard for all other concentration camps, with prisoners being detained behind walls, ditches and electrified barbed wire.

prisoners out of hand. Demands for a formal investigation prompted Himmler to remove Wackerle and replace him with Theodor Eicke.

DEATH'S HEAD LEADER

At 42, Eicke was eight years older than Himmler, the man to whom he owed everything. An SA and latterly SS man, Eicke had fallen foul of the local NSDAP leadership and ended up in one of the improvised holding camps not as a guard, but as a prisoner. Himmler learned of his plight and had him released. In June 1934 he took charge at Dachau. Eicke persuaded Himmler to create a new unit especially for him: the SS *Wachverbände*, soon re-named *Totenkopfverbände*. Its alumni included Rudolf Höss, later commandant at Auschwitz, from whom we know so much about Eicke's methods.

Eicke's training regime hammered home the message that the prisoners were not human beings. They were dangerous enemies of the state whose mere existence was a menace to Germany. The guards were not just members of the master race, but were its paladins, defending Germany day and night against traitors and racial enemies. To show a hint of compassion to the inmates was tantamount to collusion.

BRUTAL GUARDS

Few of the *Totenkopfverbände* seem to have needed much prompting to indulge in gratuitous acts of violence. They vied with one another to develop new and more sadistic methods of punishment for 'crimes' like failing to salute a guard quickly enough. The men of the *Totenkopfverbände* slid individually and collectively into a pit of depravity. And since there was a steady two-way traffic of personnel between the *Totenkopfverbände* and the *Waffen SS*, the evil first given full rein at Dachau permeated the military formations too.

By mid-1936, Eicke's

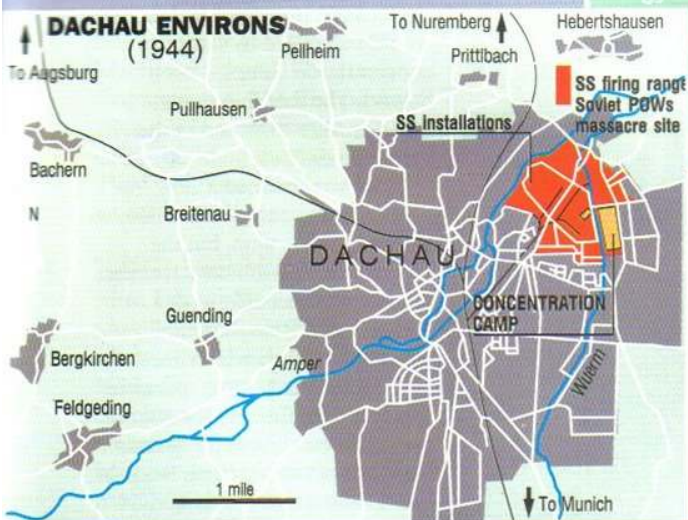
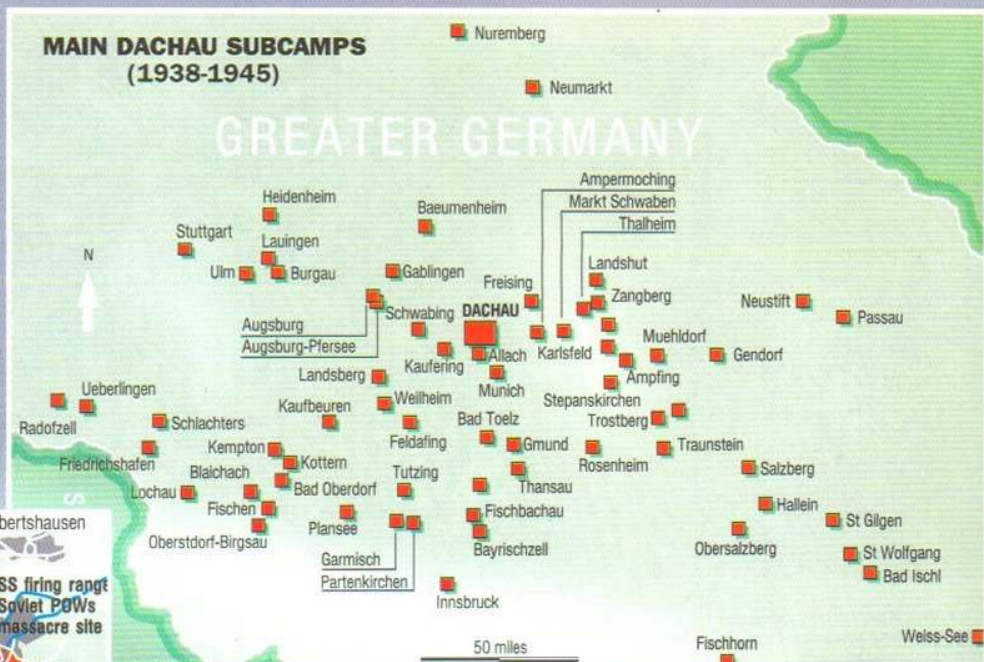
The 'model' concentration camp

The use of space in Dachau was considered perfect for their purposes by the guards, and the basic layout and routine was followed in many later camps as a standard model.

Prisoners were held in large barrack blocks. Each was divided into five rooms, in each of which 54 men slept in triple-tiered bunks. There were tables for eating at the end of the bunk structures.

Lavatory facilities were deliberately inadequate: the 270 prisoners in each block had the use of only two washrooms with a total of 12 toilets. These were hideous places, providing the stage and the cue for the most revolting cruelties against starving, sickly prisoners frequently suffering from diarrhoea. Drowning the last man to finish in the excrement of his cell mates was a practice common to the *Totenkopfverbände*, a practice which spread throughout the Nazi camp system.

MAIN DACHAU SUBCAMPS (1938-1945)

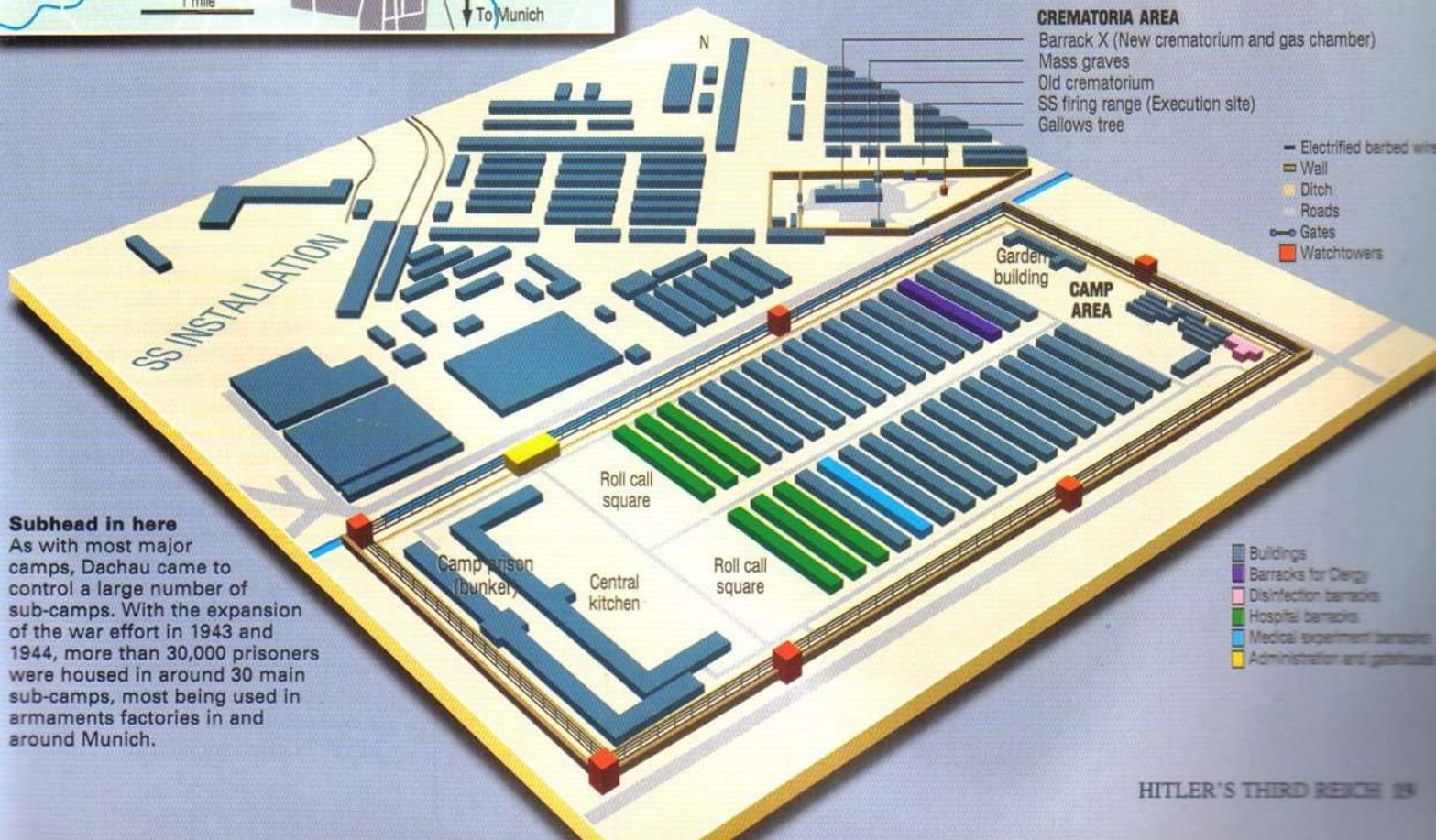


Dachau and its environs

The camp was located on the site of an old armaments factory at Dachau, north of Munich. With the outbreak of war the SS established armaments factories at Dachau and other camps. These were used to manufacture and repair small arms and other military equipment, as well as to make components for aircraft firms like Messerschmitt and Heinkel. Dachau was also one of the most important manufacturers of clothing for the German armed forces – it was the location of the central SS clothing and insignia department, and also manufactured webbing, belts and straps for the Wehrmacht.

CREMATORIA AREA

- Barrack X (New crematorium and gas chamber)
- Mass graves
- Old crematorium
- SS firing range (Execution site)
- Gallows tree



Subhead in here

As with most major camps, Dachau came to control a large number of sub-camps. With the expansion of the war effort in 1943 and 1944, more than 30,000 prisoners were housed in around 30 main sub-camps, most being used in armaments factories in and around Munich.

NAZI HORRORS



Left: Dachau inmates cheer as the camp is liberated by troops of the US Army's 157th Infantry Regiment.

Above: American troops found more than 30 railroad cars filled with bodies. They had been shipped from camps further east to avoid the Russians and had died on the way to Dachau.

Totenkopfverbände had increased to 3,500 men in five *sturmbanne*. Eicke himself became inspector of concentration camps. Later, with the outbreak of war, he commanded the *Totenkopf* regiment of the Waffen SS, recruited from the Death's Head camp guards. It had expanded to become a full-sized SS panzer division by the time of his death in an air crash early in 1943.

HEYDRICH AND HIMMLER

Although Eicke commanded the concentration camp guards, real control of the camp system fell to Heinrich Himmler and Reinhard Heydrich. Heydrich, as head of the SD, identified the regime's enemies and ordered their arrest or release from the camps, but had no authority within them. The camp kommandants had no say in who was handed over to them, or if and when prisoners might be released. And some were let free, especially in the early days.

One survivor of a 'medium term' sentence at Dachau was Heinz Jager. His crime: refusing



"An unbelievable sight. Flatcars and open boxcars with hundreds of emaciated bodies piled one on top of the other – bodies of men, women and children lying in grotesque positions."

Marcus Smith, doctor, US Army

to sell his farm near the Berghof so it could become part of Hitler's mountain lair. He faced down Martin Bormann who came to buy him out in 1934, and was slammed into Dachau for nearly four years before he was released. His farm was sold anyway, and ironically he ended up working on the construction of the Nazi leaders' much expanded Bavarian retreat.

Dachau in the 1930s was kept clean enough to be used as a showpiece for 'revolutionary justice'. Enemies of the state paraded in uniform, performed drill and sang Nazi songs.

Through such robust methods 'anti-social elements' would be returned to the path of righteousness and could rejoin the *Volk* – so ran the Party line. Himmler conducted personal tours for Gauleiters and other party officials, as well as for foreign sympathisers.

The camp appeared to be a model institution. Himmler was especially proud of the herb gardens outside, tended by the prisoners and the source of some of his quack homeopathic remedies. This 'kitchen garden' was another first for Dachau that would be copied by later concentration camps – even down to the fact that many inmates were drowned in the irrigation ditches.

Dachau remained a concentration camp rather than an extermination camp, but the purpose-built machinery for mass murder was installed in due course. Lord Russell, who investigated Nazi war crimes after 1945 noted the bizarre spectacle of a bird box fitted to the roof of the gas ovens where the guards disposed of their victims' corpses. The Dachau bird box is a vivid example of Nazi schizophrenia: providing shelter and comfort for wild animals while slaughtering human beings on an industrial scale.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

From 1934-45, many high profile political prisoners were held in Dachau. Former Austrian chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg, the bankers Fritz Thyssen and Hjalmar Schacht and the princes of Prussia and Hesse were all there, together with the anti-Nazi pastor Martin Niemöller. The latter was able to speak with Georg Elser, the man who had been arrested for planting the time-bomb that apparently so narrowly failed to kill Hitler in November 1939.

Elser was kept at Dachau for nearly six years, housed in relative comfort in his own cell: uncharacteristic treatment for someone whose explosives allegedly came within a few

Medical Experiments at Dachau

Murder in the name of knowledge

minutes of blowing Adolf Hitler to pieces. This strange leniency prompted speculation that it was a conspiracy among the Nazi leadership: he told Niemöller he was an SS man, acting on Heydrich's instructions. Even his death was mysterious: he was executed in 1945 but his death was made to appear the result of an Allied air raid. Whatever the truth was of this inter-Nazi conspiracy, it perished with the participants that summer.

Inmates were put to work. It was over the gates of Dachau that Himmler's slogan *Arbeit Macht Frei* ('work liberates') first appeared. The first prisoners were put to extending the camp, building their own jail. They were later used to build an SS barracks nearby.

HARD LABOUR

Most Dachau labour was unskilled. Prisoners built roads, drained marshland, and worked at gravel pits in the countryside around. However, a number of small workshops were set up in the camp, the most notable of which was the forge where mastersmith Paul Müller made some of the finest Damascus sword and knife blades ever manufactured. Dachau also housed a busy bakery and meat processing plant.

Detachments of inmates were sent to Austria shortly after the Anschluss, where they hacked out a new concentration camp at a quarry on the edge of Mauthausen. The new camp had a dual role: firstly to replicate Dachau's political function, doing for Austrian anti-Nazis what the original camp had done for opposition in Germany; secondly, to provide a slave labour force for Himmler's *Deutsche Erde und Steinwerke GmbH*, or German Earth and Stone Company. This was one of a number of such enterprises owned by the SS.

Dachau was also the scene of Nazi medical experiments. Some of the 'experiments' were killings performed without any scientific veneer, spectacular acts of sadism perpetrated for the amusement of the staff. Some were part of a genuine search for knowledge – testing buoyancy aids for aircrew shot down over the sea or examining the effects of altitude for pilots bailing out of their aircraft. Genuine experiments indeed, but carried out with a callousness totally at odds with the normal ethics of the medical profession and indefensible to any civilized enquiry.

Hundreds of people were subjected to these experiments: about half of them died in terrible pain, locked in a pressure chamber or immersed in freezing water. Most of the survivors were executed to remove witness. The victims included some American aircrew shot down over Germany as well as other Allied POWs.

Other inmates were used as guinea pigs, trialling malaria vaccines; 30-40 died of malaria, several hundred from other diseases their weakened constitutions were unable to ward off. Others died from overdoses of the experimental anti-malarial drugs.

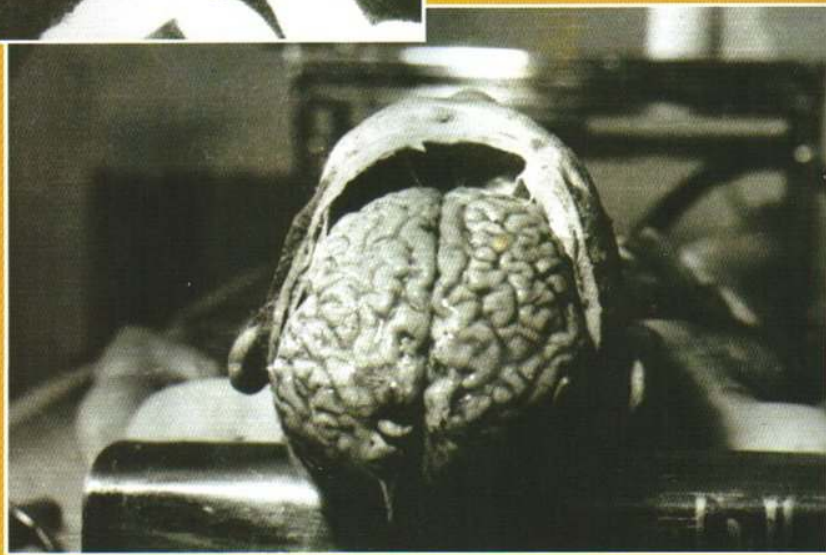


Above: Much of what the modern world knows about the effects of the thin atmosphere at high altitudes comes from a very dirty source: the lives of hundreds of concentration camp prisoners who in the name of research died in agony in the pressure chambers at Dachau.



Left: Doctor Sigmund Rascher conducted many of the aviation-related experiments at Dachau, including the freezing test seen here. Rascher was later to fall foul of Heinrich Himmler, and ended up an inmate himself. He was executed by the SS in 1945.

Right: A post mortem examination is carried out on this inmate showed that he had air bubbles in the blood vessels of the brain. He had been subjected to – and survived – high altitude experiments, but was later killed by strangulation under water.





Goering

THE BRUTAL BUCCANEER

An idle glutton capable of bursts of tremendous energy, Hermann Goering was a cynical, avaricious brute who was nevertheless like putty in the Führer's hands.

OF ALL the leading Nazis, World War I fighter ace Hermann Goering was the only one regarded with any affection by the German people. Bluff and hearty, Goering had a gargantuan appetite and a ponderous sense of humour – characteristics with apparently enduring appeal in German politics. The British ambassador described him as a 'brutal buccaneer, but one who has certain attractive qualities'.

Goering the gangster

What neither he, nor the German public knew, was that the amiable Goering was the greatest gangster in the Nazi regime. By nature lazy, he was nevertheless capable of applying himself with immense energy – when it suited him. Goering was also capable of great brutality. He used his many offices to pile up an immense personal fortune, and he became Hitler's officially declared successor.

Hermann was the son of Doctor Heinrich Goering, a former Prussian officer, judge and senior member of the Imperial diplomatic corps, who had been a personal friend of Bismarck.

Goering was an army lieutenant when the First World

War broke out in 1914. He saw action in the trenches before volunteering for the air service. Goering became a fighter pilot, rising by the end of the war to command the elite Richthofen *Jagdgeschwader*. Credited with 20 aerial victories, Goering was a bone fide war hero, who had been awarded the Iron Cross First Class and Prussia's highest award for valour, the *Pour le Mérite* or 'Blue Max'.

After Germany's defeat in 1918, the 25-year old pilot moved first to Denmark, where he became a barnstorming stunt

pilot, and then to Sweden to fly for one of the first airlines.

There he met a wealthy and stunningly attractive 29-year old Swedish woman, Carin von Kantzow, who was already estranged from her husband. She married Goering early in 1922, after he enrolled at the University of Munich to study history – an option now possible thanks to Carin's money. Like Hitler, Goering felt Germany's defeat very personally, but unlike Hitler felt the necessity for more education – his career as a soldier and a pilot had left him with no

practical qualifications or abilities in the hard postwar world.

He and Carin heard Hitler speak at a street protest. Goering was impressed by Hitler's ranting against the Allied powers' attempts to prosecute German war criminals, and he barged into the humble office of the NSDAP to fill in an application form.

The appearance of a famous flier caused an understandable stir in the Party, and Hitler was delighted to recruit someone with both money and a name. Goering fell under Hitler's spell, and devoted his considerable energies to mobilising support for Hitler's revolution. By the end of the year he was given command of the stormtroopers of the SA.

Wounded for the Party

Goering marched by Hitler's side during the Beer Hall putsch in 1923, and was severely wounded when the police opened fire. He escaped to Sweden and did not return to Germany for four years. Carin's money ran out during his time in exile, and when he came back he was obliged to find a job.

He was briefly a sales representative for BMW, but returned to politics and in 1928 was one of the twelve Nazis elected to the Reichstag. Four years later the ebullient Goering

Lust for Power

The most powerful man after Hitler

Hitler saw the much-decorated war hero as the ideal man to command the roughnecks of the SA when he joined the party in 1922. Elected to the Reichstag in 1928, Goering became President after the 1932 election, in which the Nazis won 230 out of 609 seats.

When Hitler became Chancellor in January 1933, Goering was appointed Prussian Minister of the Interior. This gave him control of the Prussian police and allowed him to establish the Gestapo. He set up the first concentration camps before taking on additional duties as the Reich Minister of Aviation. When Germany's clandestine rearmament came out into the open. Goering, who had ended the First World War an acting captain, insisted on being made a General.

In 1935 Goering took control of the Nazi Four-

Year Plan intended to make the country self-sufficient, which gave him endless possibilities for personal enrichment. He reached the height of his powers in 1938 when Nazi dirty tricks ousted the Army high command. Goering, promoted to Field Marshal, became Germany's senior military officer. At the same time, he remained commissioner for the four-year plan and Minister for Prussia.

Even though promoted to the unique rank of Reichsmarshal after the German triumphs of 1940, Luftwaffe failures in succeeding years meant that he fell increasingly out of favour.

Hermann Goering addresses the 1938 Nuremberg Party Rally. He was by now in control of the German Air Force and the German economy, and was second only to Hitler in the Nazi hierarchy.





Above: Goering as head of the SA during the Beer Hall Putsch of 1923. The former flier was seriously wounded in the confrontation with the Munich police, and went on the run to Sweden.

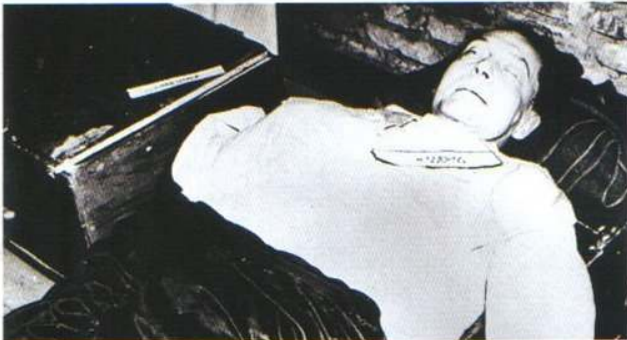


Hermann Goering dressed in a Nazi party brown shirt after Hitler's accession to power in 1933. At his neck the former fighter pilot wears Imperial Germany's highest award for gallantry, the Pour le Mérite.

HITLER'S HENCHMEN



Left: Hermann Goering at the controls of a Fokker Triplane. Goering was a good pilot, amassing 20 kills on the Western Front, and he rose to command the unit founded by Manfred von Richthoven



Right: As Goering's star waned in the Third Reich he retreated into a baronial lifestyle. Two of his major passions were collecting art treasures and hunting.



Left: Hermann Goering escaped the noose after the main Nuremberg war crime trial, taking a cyanide capsule before he could be hanged.

became president of the Reichstag after the election which saw the Nazis emerge as the biggest single party, though they lacked a majority.

He was one of the few Nazis at ease among the upper classes, and his presence at Hitler's side was a source of mistaken comfort to many aristocrats, including von Hindenburg. But Goering's meteoric rise to political office was marred by personal tragedy. His beloved wife had contracted tuberculosis, and died in 1931.

POSITION OF POWER

When Hitler became chancellor in 1933, he appointed Goering Minister President for Prussia, and Goering seized the reins of power without hesitation. He Nazified the police force and drafted SA and Stahlhelm men into 'auxiliary' police units which could continue their street battles with the Nazis' enemies under the cloak of legality.

Goering's most far-reaching move came when he expanded a political intelligence unit of the Prussian police force. Renamed the *Geheimes Staats Polizei*, or Secret State Police, it was soon to

become one of the most feared organisations in history, under its acronym of Gestapo.

Two years later, with elections now a thing of the past, Goering persuaded Hitler to appoint him Reichs Minister for aviation and commander-in-chief of the Luftwaffe. This was a double victory for him: Germany had been forbidden an air arm by the Allies in 1918, and the German army wanted to control military aviation as soon as the government was prepared to break the treaty. Goering spent the next ten years maintaining the Luftwaffe's independence from army or naval control, enhancing his own position but gravely weakening Germany's armed forces in the process.

AMASSING A FORTUNE

Although best known for commanding the Luftwaffe, Goering was also appointed to oversee the Nazi Four-Year Plan, an economic programme inspired by the Soviet Five-Year plans. Goering publicly trumpeted his ignorance of economics, while exploiting his office to make a personal fortune. He imposed

wage and price controls, slashed imports and forcibly persuaded German businesses to fund the development of key military resources, especially where the nation was dependent on imports. Thus synthetic rubber and fuel oil extracted from coal were manufactured regardless of expense. This created the basis on which Germany could wage war even if subjected to another naval blockade.

Although only created in 1937, within two years the *Hermann Goering Reichswerke* was the biggest industrial enterprise in Europe. Formed to exploit the low grade iron ore fields of Brunswick, Goering expanded it rapidly by bullying industrialists into forced loans, taking over Jewish assets and then grabbing the cream of the armaments industries in annexed Austria and Czechoslovakia.

Over the next three years the conglomerate snowballed, seizing industrial plant from France to the Ukraine. By 1943 Hermann Goering controlled most of Europe's aluminium, chemical, coal, iron and steel industries. His management style was as

dilettante as Hitler's administration – the *Reichsmarschall* spending much of his time adding to his art collection. He looted enough Old Masters to fill several museums, and the art world is still dealing with the repercussions of his plundering today.

RETREAT TO FANTASY

Discredited successively by the defeat in the Battle of Britain, the failure to keep Stalingrad supplied, and above all by the Luftwaffe's inability to prevent Allied bombing attacks on German cities, Goering retreated to his estates.

His quixotic attempt to take charge in April 1945, once Hitler was trapped in Berlin, led to his expulsion from the party and an order for his arrest. He evaded the SS, and played his role of jovial bully for the last time at the Nuremberg trials.

His quick tongue was a match for several of the prosecuting team; but, as he recognised from the start, his death sentence was inevitable. Slippery to the last, he escaped the hangman by swallowing cyanide.

Goering's Luftwaffe

Spearhead of Germany's victories from 1939 to 1942

Hermann Goering's Luftwaffe was an offensive weapon, designed to play its part in the fast-moving Blitzkrieg warfare which Germany unleashed on the world. Although intended to operate closely with the army and the navy, Goering jealously guarded its independence.

Its early development was rapid, and a number of advanced new designs were introduced in time to be combat-tested with great success in the Spanish civil war. These lessons gave German aircrews a decisive tactical advantage as World War II broke out. Goering gloried in the Luftwaffe's early triumphs, as German aircraft played a decisive role in the defeat of Poland and in the Blitzkrieg in the west. But the army blamed him for Hitler's order to halt the tanks outside Dunkirk; in the soldiers' view Goering allowed the British to escape.

The Luftwaffe's defeat in the Battle of Britain tarnished his reputation further, but it only became apparent over the next two years that Goering had failed to oversee the development of a new generation of aircraft which could stop the allied bombers appearing in increasing numbers over the

Reich. A number of promising and advanced designs had been cancelled; more were being misused in the wrong roles. As a result, the Luftwaffe ended the war with many of the same aircraft it had in 1939.

Although the Luftwaffe wreaked fearful destruction on the Red air force during the 1941 invasion of Russia, by the time of the Battle of Kursk in the summer of 1943, Soviet aircraft and pilots were fighting on equal terms with the Luftwaffe. A year later, Allied air power exercised total control of the skies over the Normandy invasion beaches, and British and American bombers were pounding the Reich to destruction.

There was no formal mechanism by which the Luftwaffe co-ordinated its affairs either with German industry or with the other armed services. The Luftwaffe liaison officers at Führer headquarters were relatively junior and without influence. Goering met Hitler only at irregular intervals after 1941, and kept an ever lower profile after his insistence that the Luftwaffe could supply the cut-off 6th Army at Stalingrad by air was proved so catastrophically wrong.



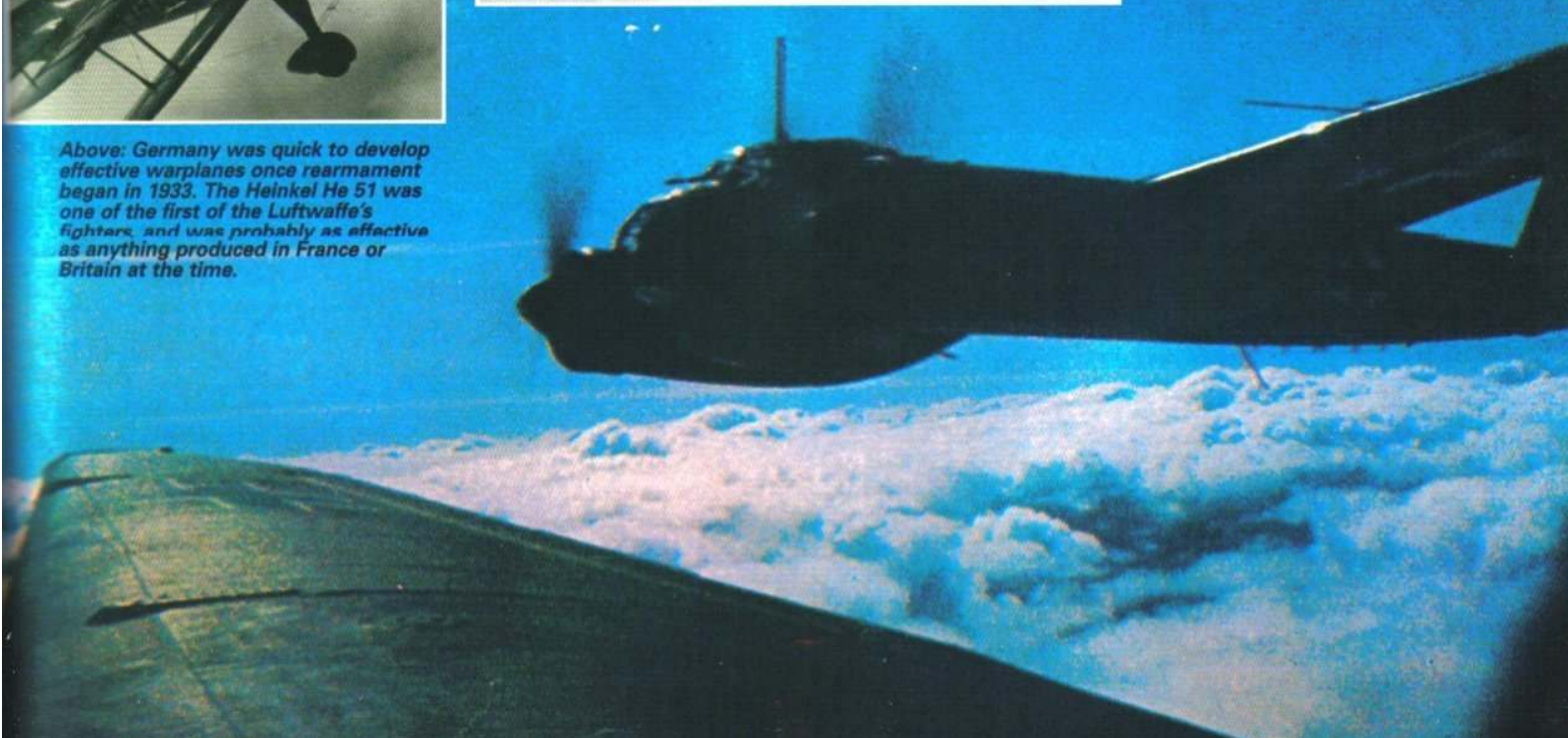
Above: Goering was a colourful figure, with his imposing bulk encased in unique uniforms. But the energy he used to create the Luftwaffe was wasted on luxury, and was not used to develop his service to meet the ever changing demands of modern warfare.

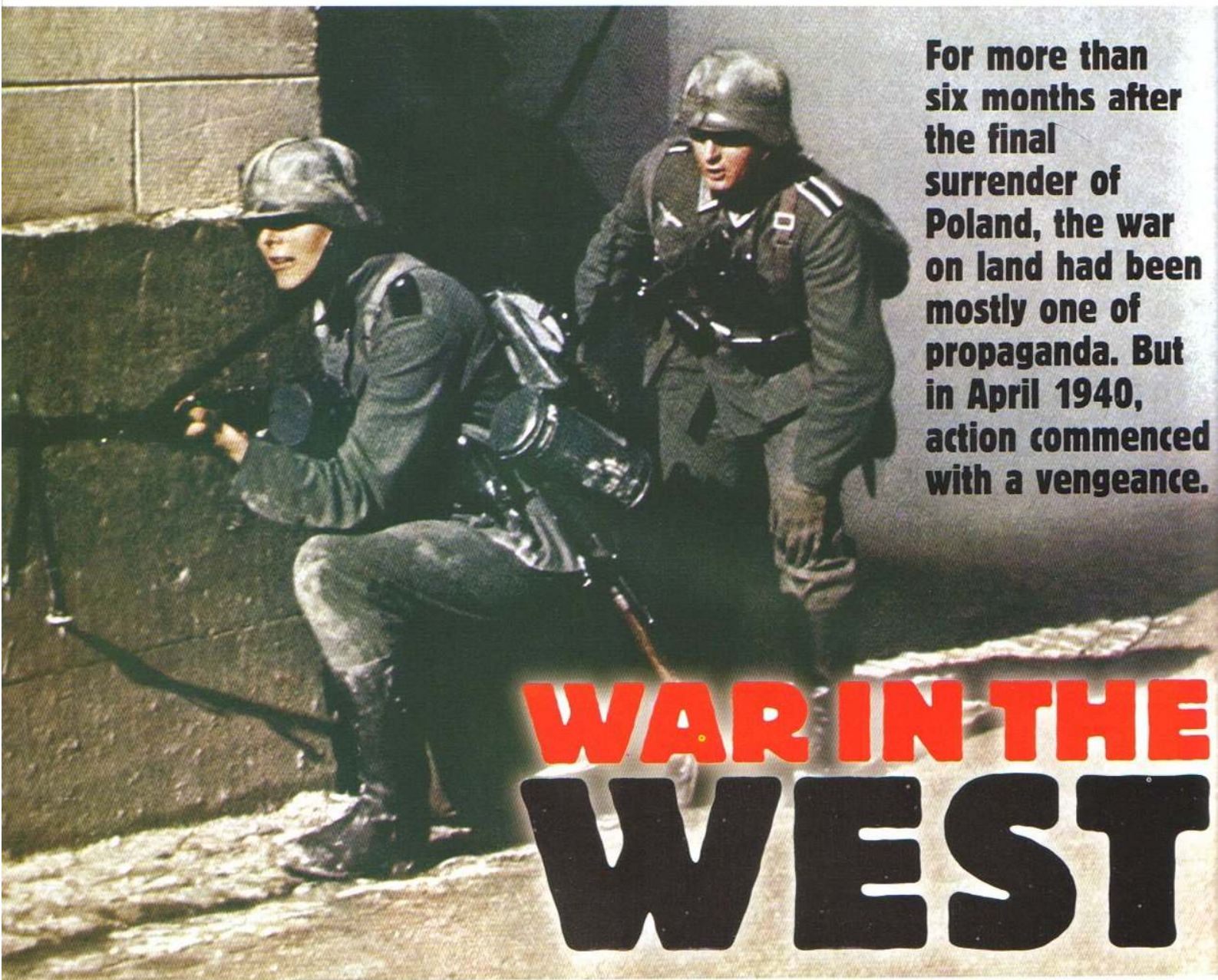
Left: Even when German engineers produced potential war-winning weapons, Goering always deferred to Hitler's uninformed demands. The astonishing Me 262 was a case in point: Hitler insisted on this quintessential fighter being deployed as a bomber.

Below: Aircraft like the Junkers 88 meant that Germany began the war with aircraft at least as good as and in most cases better than any rivals. However, many of these designs had to soldier on long after becoming obsolescent.



Above: Germany was quick to develop effective warplanes once rearmament began in 1933. The Heinkel He 51 was one of the first of the Luftwaffe's fighters, and was probably as effective as anything produced in France or Britain at the time.





For more than six months after the final surrender of Poland, the war on land had been mostly one of propaganda. But in April 1940, action commenced with a vengeance.

WAR IN THE WEST

HITLER became aware of the importance of Norway during the Russo-Finnish war of 1939. The British and French planned to send aid to Finland across the northern tip of Scandinavia, which would have cut off the Swedish iron supply to the Reich.

Sweden was Germany's primary source of high grade iron ore, the vital raw material being exported via the Norwegian port of Narvik. Hitler's naval advisors

had also been pointing out the value of Norway's ports since the first weeks of the war – possession by Germany would mean that the Kriegsmarine would have a much easier task of getting out into the North Atlantic shipping lanes.

On December 14 1939, Hitler issued OKW – *Oberkommando Der Wehrmacht* or High Command of the Armed Forces – with orders to begin planning a Norwegian campaign. Hitler's determination to invade was heightened in February, when the British destroyer *Cossack* seized

the German supply ship *Altmark* in Norwegian waters. The *Altmark* had been supporting the *Graf Spee*'s raid, and the action liberated nearly 300 British merchant seamen who were being held prisoner.

On March 1, Hitler issued the formal directive for *Weserübung* or Operation 'Spring Awakening'. But German naval preparations and troop movements could not be hidden, and the Allies reacted.

On 8 April, at Churchill's urging, the Royal Navy began laying mines in the waters off

The invasion of Norway was mounted primarily to protect Germany's main source of iron ore. The plan was to take key Norwegian cities with only a limited number of troops.

Norway to disrupt the movement of shipping. British and French troops were being moved to the north of Scotland, ready for intervention if necessary. But it was too late.

On the night of April 8-9, the Kriegsmarine deployed two battlecruisers, one pocket battleship, six cruisers and 14 destroyers in the assault on Norway. One force struck



directly for Oslo, while further landings were made up the coast – at Kristiansand, Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim and Narvik. They were supported by airborne landings.

The destroyer HMS *Glowworm*, commanded by Lieutenant-Commander Gerard Roope, encountered the heavy cruiser *Admiral Hipper*. Knowing that British troopships in the area would be severely handled if the *Hipper* were to locate them, Roope launched torpedoes and then, even though battered to ruin by the cruiser's heavy eight-inch main armament, brought his little ship round to ram the German warship. Roope was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross.

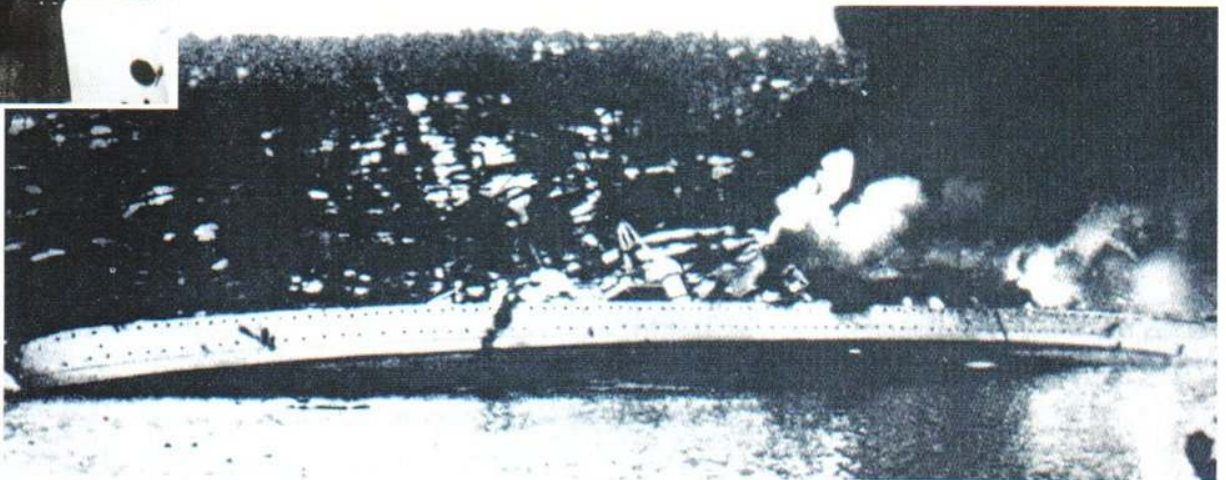
NAVAL LOSSES

At Oskarsborg in Oslo Fjord, the Norwegian coastal defences sank the cruiser *Blücher* and damaged the pocket battleship *Lützow*, before airborne forces captured the capital. King Haakon VII had rejected a German ultimatum delivered at 0530 and, profiting from the confusion following the sinking of the *Blücher*, escaped inland and eventually reached the United Kingdom on June 7. Meanwhile, an attempt at a coup d'état by the far right pro-Nazi Norwegian politician Vidkun Quisling actually



Above: Troops prepare to debark from a steamer lying at anchor off Trondheim. The Germans relied on speed and surprise for success in their attacks.

Right: Hit by shore batteries and torpedoes, the heavy cruiser *Blücher* lies wrecked in Oslo Fjord. More than 1,500 sailors and troops were killed.



Danish Walkover

Seizing a base for the attack on Norway

The attack on Denmark was the logical military precursor of the assault on Norway. Luftwaffe planners working on the attack, code named Operation Weserübung, (Spring Awakening) needed airfields in Denmark to support air attacks and operations in southern Norway.

The swift occupation of Denmark which began at 0415 on April 9 is notable for the first use of airborne forces in war. At 0500 paratroops were used to seize the unarmed fortress of Madnes and soon afterwards the important airfield at Aalborg in north Jutland. Danish forces in North Schleswig did resist for a few hours, but the navy, which had not been alerted, allowed a German troopship to enter Copenhagen harbour unmolested.

Right: The Danish army was unprepared for a major conflict, and its equipment was no match for the full might of the Wehrmacht which it had to face.



Below: German troops arrived in Copenhagen almost unopposed, arriving by troopship in the harbour. The Danish navy had no advance warning of the attack, and could offer little to stop the enemy.





The Battles of Narvik

German naval defeat in northern Norwegian waters

In the north, the Royal Navy 2nd Destroyer Flotilla under Captain B.A.W. Warburton-Lee entered Narvik Fjord on the night of the 9-10 April. At dawn they caught the German invasion forces. The flotilla sank the German destroyers *Wilhelm Heidkamp* and *Anton Schmidt* and six transports, damaging three more destroyers in the process. British losses were HMS *Hunter* sunk, HMS *Hardy* driven ashore and HMS *Hotspur* damaged. As they withdrew the British engaged the German transport *Rauenfels* which was carrying the bulk of the invasion force's ammunition. The ship blew up and sank. Warburton-Lee, mortally wounded, was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross.

The British returned to Narvik at dawn on April 13, with a more powerful force under Vice Admiral W.J. Whitworth which included the battleship HMS *Warspite*, and the destroyers *Bedouin*, *Cossack*,

Eskimo, *Punjabi*, *Hero*, *Icarus*, *Kimberley*, *Forester* and *Foxhound*. The *Warspite's* floatplane located the German destroyer *Erich Koellner* which was waiting in ambush at the mouth of the fjord and she was torpedoed and left a blazing wreck. The floatplane also located the submarine U-64, which the aircraft bombed and sank.

Six German destroyers now emerged to fight a fast-moving battle in which three, *Dieter von Roeder*, *Hermann Kunne* and *Erich Giese* were sunk. The survivors were pursued into Rombaksfjord where *Georg Thiele* was driven ashore, but not before damaging HMS *Cossack* with a torpedo. The three remaining German destroyers, the *Bernd von Arnim*, *Hans Ludemann* and *Wolfgang Zenker* were found abandoned at the head of the fjord – one having been scuttled as a result of damage from the April 10 battle.

Having wrecked these ships, Whitworth's force withdrew and were able to pick up *Hardy's* surviving crew from a Norwegian vessel at the mouth of Ofot Fjord. The two battles of Narvik reduced the Kriegsmarine destroyer force by half – a loss which was to have great significance later in the year.

Left: The port of Narvik burns as a Royal Navy destroyer noses in to the pier. Although the British had the better of the sea battles, on land the Allies were much less successful, and withdrew.

helped to stiffen Norwegian resistance.

At sea, the submarine HMS *Truant* sank the cruiser *Karlsruhe* and the battlecruiser *Gneisenau* was damaged in an action with the battlecruiser HMS *Renown*.

On April 10 the cruiser *Konigsberg* was sunk by air attack at Bergen, and the following day the *Lutzow* sustained further damage when she was hit by a torpedo fired by the submarine HMS *Spearfish*.

NARVIK BATTLES

The German forces in Norway which came under the toughest pressure were those in Narvik. British and French troops, including the Foreign Legion, had been readied to assist the Finns who had been attacked by the Soviet Union in the winter of 1939-40. They were deployed to counter the Germans in the north of Norway. Narvik was invested by the British 24th Guards Brigade, French *Chasseurs Alpins*, a demibrigade of the Foreign Legion and a brigade of

Right: The campaigns in Norway and Denmark were the first in history in which airborne troops played a part, Luftwaffe paratroopers making attacks on numerous targets.

the Polish *Chasseurs du Nord*. The Allied expeditionary force landed at Narvik on 15 April, at Namsos on the 16/17th and at Andalsnes on the 18th.

The German forces under Lieutenant-General Eduard Dietl consisted of mountain infantry, paratroop reinforcements and German sailors from the wrecked destroyers who were armed and equipped from captured Norwegian stocks.

Allied progress under Major General Macksey was slow and he was replaced by General Bethouart, who pressed on to capture Narvik on May 28 and link up with Norwegian forces. However, by now events in France had made Norway a side show. Moreover, free of commitments elsewhere in Norway the Germans could direct more men and resources to the recapture of Narvik.



In a chaotic campaign much of the German naval strength in the area was destroyed, and Allied ground forces slowed down the German attacks, but the British and French lacked air cover. From their base in Oslo the Germans pushed northwards up the valleys of the Gudbrandsdalen and Osterdalen towards Andalsnes and Trondheim. Allied troops were

withdrawn from Andalsnes on 1 May, Namsos on May 2-3 and Narvik on 8 June.

LOSSES IN NORWAY

German losses in the Norwegian campaign were 5,500 men and more than 200 aircraft on top of the significant naval losses. The British lost 4,500 men, of whom 1,500 were drowned when the old aircraft carrier HMS



Above: British 'Tribal' class fleet destroyers prowling the waters of Rombaksfjord. Having disposed of half the entire German destroyer inventory, the Kriegsmarine's strength is severely depleted.

Below: The veteran battleship HMS Warspite may have been slow by modern standards, but her powerful guns could and did overwhelm anything the Kriegsmarine had at Narvik.



Above: Any German destroyers which escaped being sunk by the British forces were driven into nearby Rombaksfjord, where their crews either scuttled or abandoned them.

Below: HMS Warspite leaves Narvik, passing the drifting destroyer Erich Koellner. The German vessel had been battered into ruin by the battleship and her escorts on their way in.



Glorious and her two escorting destroyers were sunk by the battle cruiser *Scharnhorst*. About 1,800 Norwegians were killed and French and Polish losses were about 500.

There is a case for saying that the Norwegian campaign marked the first Allied land victory of the war. The joint Polish, British, Norwegian and French force fought the Germans to a standstill in Narvik, though ultimately in vain. Whether or not Narvik was a victory,

the sea battles between the Royal Navy and the Kriegsmarine severely weakened the German navy, and this was a factor in the delay and later cancellation of Operation Sealion – the planned invasion of the United Kingdom.

THE LOW COUNTRIES

As the campaign in Norway drew to a close an operation far bigger and more momentous was under way in the Netherlands, Belgium and France.

In the Netherlands the

Below: German troops quickly established a dominant position in Norway.



8 June 1940
HMS *Glorious* sunk by battlecruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*.

THE NORWEGIAN CAMPAIGN

8 April
Admiral Hipper sinks HMS *Glowworm*

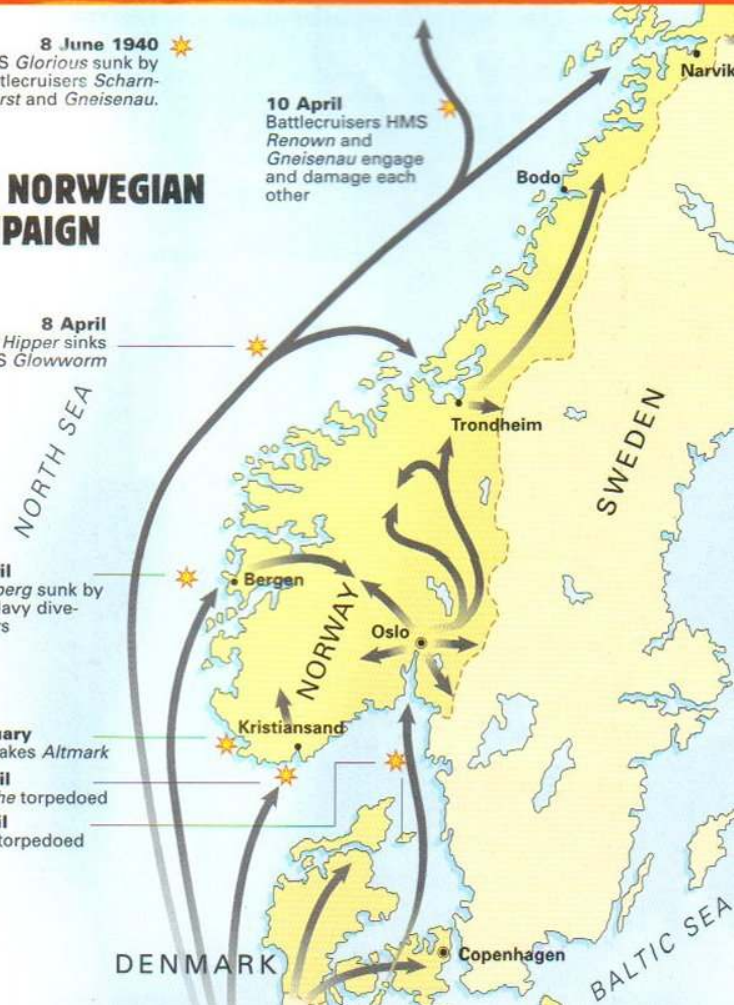
10 April
Königsberg sunk by Royal Navy dive-bombers

16 February
Cossack takes Altmark

10 April
Karlsruhe torpedoed

11 April
Lützow torpedoed

10 April
Battlecruisers HMS *Renown* and *Gneisenau* engage and damage each other



HITLER'S BATTLES 3



Above: German infantrymen wait on the Belgian border as the Wehrmacht launches its diversionary attack in the Low Countries.

government of prime minister D.J. de Geer urged a defensive posture. They were convinced that flooding the canal system would prove an effective obstacle. A series of four defensive lines anchored on the IJssel Meer to the north and the river Maas and Belgian border to the south protected 'Fortress Holland', the group of major cities in the Netherlands, including the capital at The Hague. This strategy, however, made no allowance for the speed of German mechanised attacks and vertical envelopment by paratroopers and air landing troops.

A strong pacifist movement in Holland had ensured that the army was ill-equipped for modern war. Though its total strength was 400,000 men, they had only 26 armoured cars, 656 outdated artillery pieces and no tanks. Pre-war pacifism and parsimony would cost the Netherlands dearly – the cost

including 2,100 dead and 2,700 wounded before the end of hostilities in May 1940.

The German force assigned to attack Holland was Field Marshal Fedor von Bock's Army Group B. Under his command were the 18th Army under General Kuechler and General Reichenau's 6th Army, who also had the XVI Panzer Corps attached. Reichenau – a favourite of Hitler's and one of the most committed Nazis in the higher echelons of the army – was tasked with pushing through the southern border of Holland into northern Belgium. Kuechler's mission was to link up with the airborne forces who were to capture key bridges across the water obstacles.

THE TRAP IS SPRUNG

With an almost suicidal alacrity, the allied armies in the north of France – five divisions of the British Expeditionary Force, together with eight divisions of

Below: The Wehrmacht deployed three experimental multi-turreted NbFz VI tanks to Norway in a propaganda exercise to convince the Allies that Germany had heavy tanks in production. There were no others in operation.



No more Phoney War

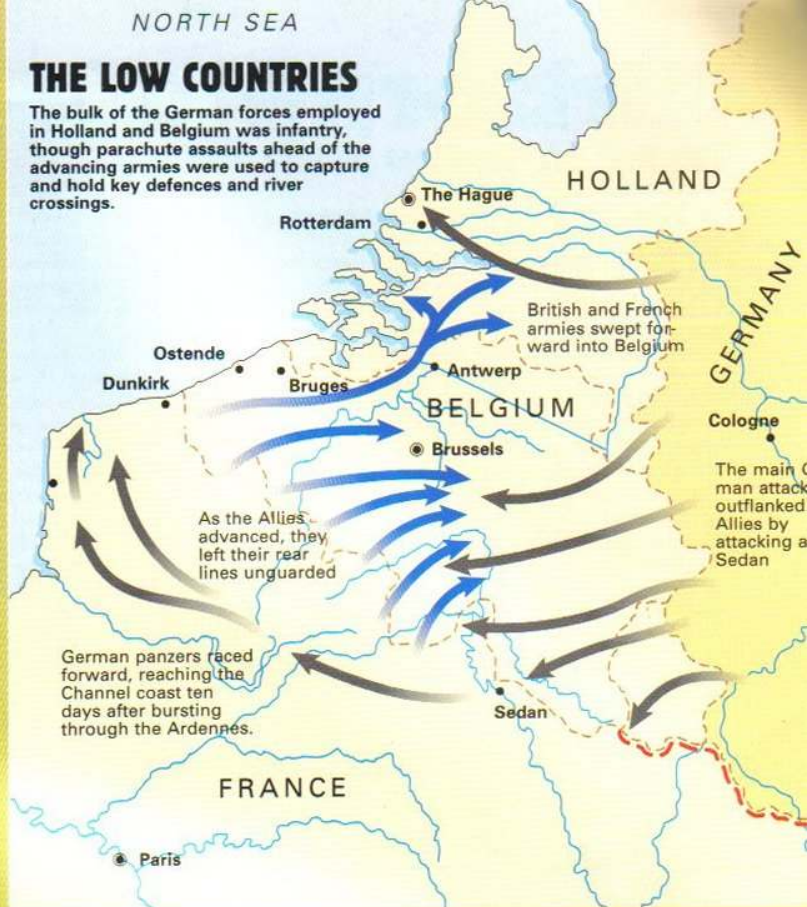
French and British forces lured into a trap

The German attack in the west was known as Fall Gelb – 'Plan Yellow'. During World War I the Imperial German Armies, using a scheme devised by General Schlieffen, had invaded neutral Belgium in an attempt to work round the left flank of the French and British armies. The Netherlands had remained neutral. It was assumed by the Allies that the Germans would try the Schlieffen Plan again.

In 1939-40 the Netherlands and Belgium were again neutral, though they were aware that they were in the firing line if the German armies attempted a repeat manoeuvre. Neither would allow Allied troops on their soil, but the French and British governments signed an agreement with the Belgians that in the event of an attack they would come to the assistance of Belgium, advancing northwards to hold a line along the river Dyle.

Unfortunately for the Allies, the Germans were planning something very different. The attacks on Holland and Belgium were diversions, a 'matador's cape' designed to draw French and British troops out of northern France. This would leave the Ardennes border near the Meuse at Sedan only weakly protected. The Germans would then launch a reverse Schlieffen plan through the Ardennes, which the Allies considered impossible terrain for modern armoured forces.

Devised by General Erich von Manstein, the plan envisaged a powerful armoured thrust through the Ardennes, with the panzers quickly forcing their way across the Meuse. They would then swing north and west at speed, cutting lines of communication and trapping the British and French in a pocket against the Channel.



Left: Lightweight PzKpfw IIs race through the forests of southern Belgium. Although small and lightly armed, such tanks were very mobile, and mobility was the key to the success of Germany's Blitzkrieg tactics.

Below: German infantry fight through a small Dutch town. The German high command deployed a total of 77 divisions for the campaign in the West. Of these, 30 were assigned to Army Group B, under the command of General von Bock. Flooding forward across Belgium and Holland, they faced 11 Dutch divisions and 22 Belgian divisions, with a further 20 Allied divisions moving north out of France. However, these would soon be distracted by the 44 German divisions to the south.



Below left: The Dutch army was seriously outmatched, without a tank to its name and with only 656 artillery pieces. Most of the guns were small and obsolescent, and many were mounted in fortresses which the Germans bypassed.



Airborne Pioneers

The first paratroopers go into battle

On May 10 German forces quickly overran the IJssel Line, the first Dutch line of defence. Paratroops and airborne forces from the 7th Air Division and the 22nd Airlanding Infantry Division made landings at bridges at Moerdijk across the river Maas, Dordrecht across the Waal, Rotterdam across the Lek and Valkenburg near Leyden.

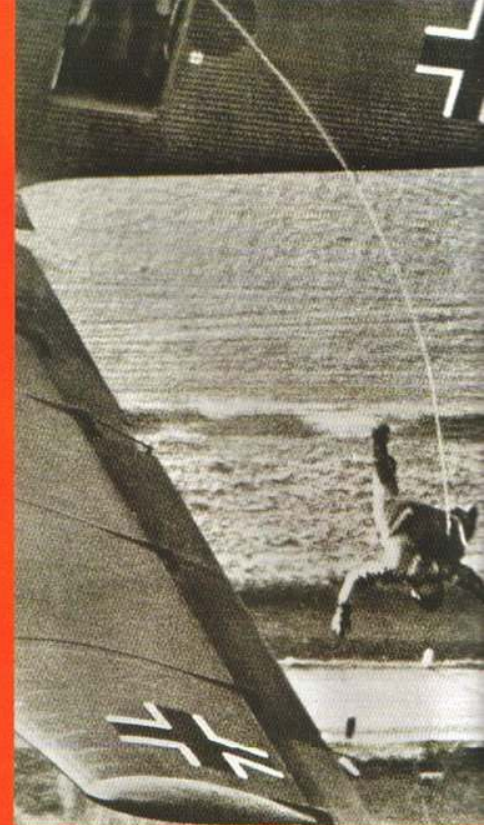
The Dutch fought bravely and attempted to eliminate the airborne bridgeheads, particularly those at Moerdijk. The attack on The Hague went awry, with paratroops scattered and unable initially to secure the airfields. As men drawn from the 22nd Infantry Division began to fly in aboard Ju 52 trimotor transports they

Below: German infantrymen link up with Fallschirmjäger or paratroopers who had seized the crossings over the Lek, leaving the route to Rotterdam open to the invaders.

realised they were to land under fire.

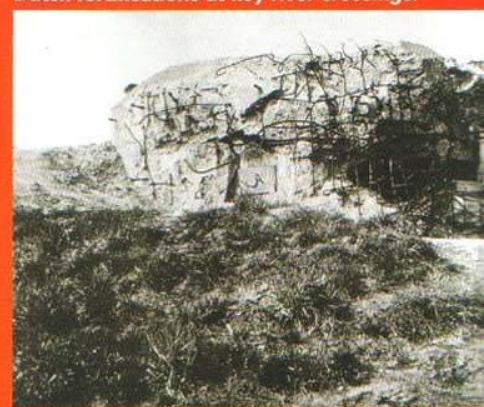
The plan had been to attack Den Hague with the intention of capturing Queen Wilhelmina and her government, but the delays in landing allowed the Royal Family to escape aboard two Royal Navy destroyers. They had initially hoped to fight on from the islands of Zeeland, but the situation deteriorated so rapidly that they sailed to Britain.

The Dutch troops holding the bridges at Moerdijk fought for three days until dislodged by the 9th Panzer Division. Then the advance pressed on towards Rotterdam. To the south the Seventh French Army was too weak to intervene, and withdrew. Dutch marines who were holding the approaches to bridges in Rotterdam were still offering stout resistance, and on the evening of May 13 the Luftwaffe received orders to 'break resistance in Rotterdam by all possible means'.



Above: Although the Wehrmacht got many of its parachute techniques from Soviet experiments of the 1930s, the Germans in 1940 were the first to show that unexpected assaults from the air could reap massive tactical dividends – just as long as the lightly-armed paratroopers were quickly relieved by conventional troops.

Below: German paratroopers used shaped explosive charges – another combat first – to penetrate the thick concrete of Belgian and Dutch fortifications at key river crossings.



the French First Army and seven of the French Seventh Army moved into Belgium. They left the defensive positions that they had spent the bitterly cold winter so arduously preparing and moved forwards to join the Belgian army in a defensive line along the Dyle and Meuse rivers.

In spite of many Luftwaffe

Left: Dutch soldiers are herded into captivity. The Dutch lost around 3,000 soldiers killed during the campaign, along with at least 2,500 civilians.

raids, in which untried Allied soldiers experienced the attacks of the Stuka dive bomber for the first time, the Allied armies reached their allotted positions by the 14th. Some battalion and brigade commanders were dismayed by the sketchy nature of the defences they now occupied, especially compared to those they had left behind. More senior commanders were getting worried about news of German movements to the south.

As yet, none of them had



realised that von Bock's slowly advancing Army Group was a feint – a huge feint to be sure, but it was not the main axis of the German attack. Even as the British and French advanced, German panzers were thrusting through the Ardennes towards Sedan, and the Allied forces were in danger of being cut off.

The 'matador's cape' had worked to perfection. By tempting the bulk of the Allies' best troops into the open, they were leaving the way clear for von Kleist's Panzer group, even now pouring across the Meuse at Sedan, to outflank them.

RAID ON ROTTERDAM

Meanwhile, on the morning of the 14th, German ground forces requested that the Luftwaffe raid on Rotterdam be cancelled because they had entered surrender negotiations. The message did not reach the bombers and 57 out of 100 dropped their payloads before a signal flare was seen. The attack

had been aimed at Dutch defences and used only high explosives, but 2.8 square kilometres (1.1 sq mile) of the city centre was destroyed, and between 800 and 980 civilians were killed. Within a few hours the Dutch government surrendered, even though its army was still largely intact.

The Rotterdam raid was seen as an act of airborne terrorism

and ended the British policy of not bombing Germany. On May 15 the first RAF raid hit the Ruhr, heralding the beginning of the strategic bombing offensive against Germany which would grow in ferocity and intensity over the next five years.

Above: Stubborn resistance to the German attack on Rotterdam brought a brutal response: 100 Heinkel He 111 bombers were sent to attack the city. Around 1,000 civilians were killed, and more than 70,000 made homeless.

Below: The next stage of the war was to see the tanks of Germany's panzer divisions come to the fore, as they smashed through France.





JUNKERS JU 87 STUKA

Most military aircraft have a streamlined elegance quite at odds with their deadly purpose. Not so the Junkers Ju 87 *Sturzkampfflugzeug* – possibly the ugliest warplane ever to turn the tide of battle.

STUKA entered the world's vocabulary in May 1940. The mere appearance of its angular silhouette in the summer sky triggering 'Stuka fright' among the columns of soldiers and refugees fleeing across France. Ordered to attack road junctions, and especially bridges, to hinder the movement of Allied ground forces, the Stukas often found their targets packed with escaping civilians. With sirens ('Jericho Trumpets') fitted to terrorise their victims, the bombers attacked with surgical precision—and then returned to strafe the survivors with their machine guns.

REARMAMENT

Under the terms of the Versailles Treaty, Germany was not allowed to have an air force, but within months of coming to power Hitler announced he would no longer be bound by this restriction. The Stuka was designed by Hans Pohlmann the following year and the first prototype, ironically powered by an imported Rolls Royce Kestrel engine, flew in 1935. Junkers had manufactured all-metal monoplane ground attack aircraft towards the end of World War I. (In March 1918 the future commander of the Luftflotte 6,

Robert Ritter von Greim carried out the first aerial anti-tank sortie over the Somme). The Ju 87 built on that experience, but Pohlmann added a new feature: the Stuka would be built to dive vertically on to its target. This offered far greater accuracy than was possible with level bombing. Japan, the USA and Britain ordered dive bombers for their naval air arms, because level attacks were not accurate enough to hit a moving warship.

The Luftwaffe's first dive bomber unit was created in 1937, and a handful of Ju 87A-1s were sent to Spain where Germany was providing military aid to the Nationalist forces. Many senior Luftwaffe officers were unimpressed with the Stuka, criticising it for being too slow, too cumbersome and an easy target for enemy fighters. However, its performance in Spain was considered excellent.

DIVE BOMBERS

It gained the whole-hearted approval of Ernst Udet, the World War I fighter ace and aerobatic pilot now drinking his way to oblivion while in charge of the Luftwaffe's technical branch. (He was so impressed, he insisted on all future bombers having dive bombing capability, a decision that killed off some promising designs and imposed serious delays on the Heinkel He

177 heavy bomber programme).

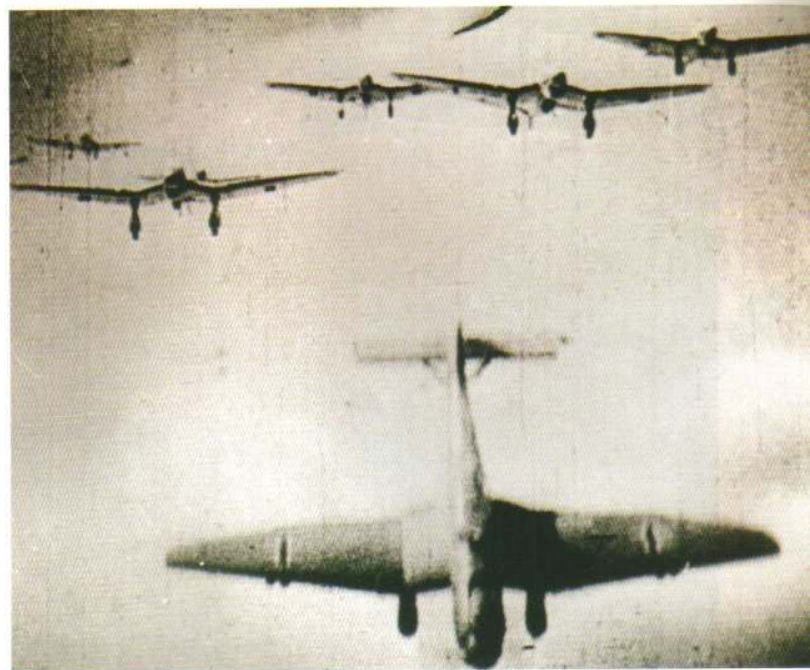
There were over 300 Stukas in service by the invasion of Poland and they performed well enough. But it was over France and the Low Countries in 1940 that they stunned the world. The British, French, Belgian and Dutch armies had more men and more tanks than the Germans, but the Luftwaffe achieved air superiority. As the panzer divisions debouched from the Ardennes forest, their way was barred by the French 9th Army.



Above: Armourers load a Ju 87B-1, probably from 3./StG1. This was the unit which made the first attacks on Polish soil in the early morning of 1 September, 1939.

Right: An artillery battery smashed by Ju 87 attacks in May 1940. Stukas could attack with deadly precision – as long as they were unmolested by fighters.

Main picture: Stukas sounded terrifying in the attack, thanks to the wind-driven 'Trumpets of Jericho' sirens attached to the main landing gear which emitted a piercing screech as the aircraft dived on its target.



“Stukas existed to carry a heavy bomb a short distance and deliver it with great accuracy; all other design considerations were subordinated to this aim.”

It was a weak formation, but held the line of the Meuse, heavy guns ranged in on likely crossing

points. French artillery positions were silenced by 120 Stukas, their front-line positions bombed to oblivion, and the German ground troops forced their way across.

The Stukas were like flying artillery, but with far greater range and flexibility. They struck at Allied divisions behind the front, catching French heavy tanks still on

their railway cars. In World War I it had proved impossible to break through the Western Front until 1918, largely because the defenders could always bring up reinforcements to seal a gap faster than the attackers could advance over the shell-torn ground. The Stuka reversed the process: now the German army could keep on the move, but the Allies could never react fast enough, their divisions slowed to a crawl by repeated air attacks behind the lines.

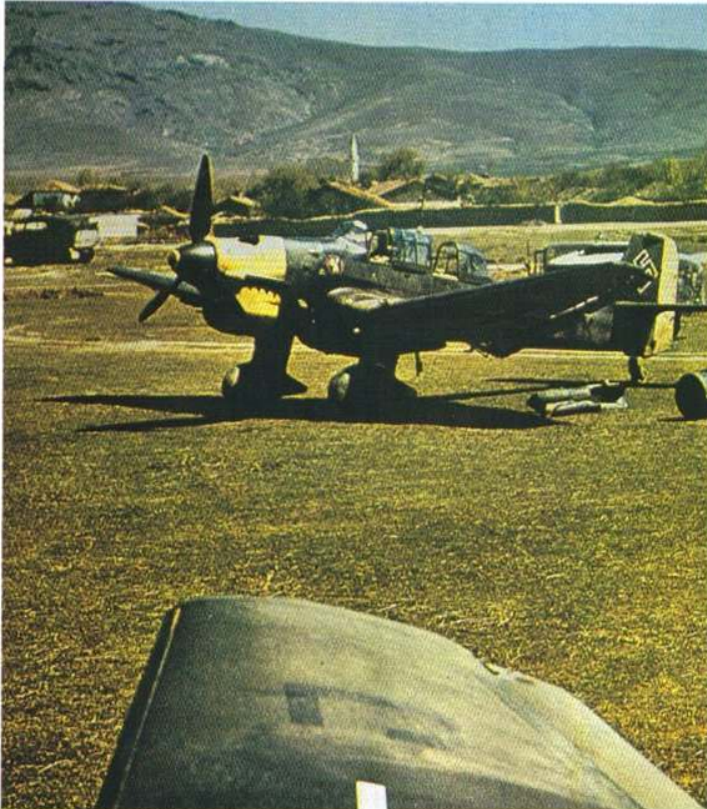
However, the Ju 87 did rely on German air superiority. Even over France, there were a number of disasters. One *staffel* (flight) was wiped out by five French fighters on 12 May. With a 100 mph speed advantage and armed with 20-mm cannon, the French fighters made short work of the lumbering and unmanoeuvrable Stukas. The Ju 87's defensive armament consisted of two fixed forward-firing 7.9-mm machine guns and one or two more, operated by the observer, on a flexible mounting in the cockpit rear. It was not enough to beat off a determined fighter pilot.

VULNERABILITIES

This became cruelly obvious in the Battle of Britain. Early in August 1940, the Stukas attacked airfields in Kent, radar sites along the south coast and the naval base at Portsmouth. If co-ordination broke down between the Ju 87s and their Bf 109 escorts, the Stukas were cut up by RAF fighters. Four Stuka *gruppen* attacked Gosport, Thorney Island, Ford and the radar station at Polling on 18 August. Their escorts were nowhere in sight as Spitfires of

Right: Nine Stuka Gruppen (wings) comprising some 336 aircraft were deployed against Poland. Thirty-one aircraft were lost in the campaign, reflecting the lack of effective fighter opposition. Stukas normally flew in kette, the three-aircraft formation seen here.





Above: Although the battles of 1940 showed that Stukas were vulnerable to modern fighters, they were still effective in other theatres. Ju 87B-2s like these wrought havoc on British ships in the Mediterranean in 1941.

Below: The Ju 87D was a cleaned up version of the Stuka, but it was still a sluggish beast – the escorting Bf 109 seen here over Russia would have had difficulty flying slowly enough to stay with the lumbering dive bombers.



No. 152 Squadron and Hurricanes of No. 43 Squadron caught them as they reformed for the flight back across the Channel. In the greatest 'Stuka Party' Fighter Command staged that summer, 30 Stukas were lost or badly damaged, including 18 of StG.77's 28 aircraft. The *Stukaverbände* were withdrawn from the battle.

The Battle of Britain was a salutary reminder of the Ju 87s limitations, but the Luftwaffe dominated other skies over other battlefields for several years to come. Stukas sank a number of British warships off Malta, and in May 1941, German air superiority over the eastern Mediterranean was good enough that Luftwaffe paratroops were able to seize Crete. It was an admittedly Pyrrhic victory, but the Royal Navy was obliged to evacuate British and Commonwealth ground forces without air cover, losing nine warships in the process. British casualties might have been even heavier had not the timetable for 'Barbarossa' demanded the transfer of VIII Fliegerkorps and its Stukas to Poland on 1 June.

SERVICE IN THE EAST

Limited numbers of Stukas served in North Africa and the Italian campaign, but it was in Russia that the Ju 87 had its greatest impact. In 1941 the Soviet air force was effectively wiped out by the Luftwaffe, and the 290 Stukas sent to the Eastern Front could attack without fear of interception.

Hans-Ulrich Rudel, Hitler's favourite pilot and Germany's most highly-decorated flier, crippled the battleship *Marat* in an attack on Kronstadt. It was he who later pioneered the 'tank busting' Ju 87G with its 37 mm guns, and claimed 519 tank 'kills' by the end of the war. Shot down 30 times, he truly bore a charmed life.

It was not until mid-1943 that German bombers were seriously menaced by Soviet fighters. Stukas continued to operate in

large numbers – over 500 of them attacked the Soviet bridgehead near Novorossiysk in April 1943. Ju 87s were supplied to allied air forces of Romania, Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria. Stuka production peaked that year, at 1,814 units. Some 5,700 were completed before production ceased in 1944.

DANGEROUS SKIES

By then, the Soviets had radar coverage of the battlefield and thousands of modern fighters with which to intercept the dwindling number of German bombers. Even those twin-engined stalwarts, the Heinkel He 111 and Junkers Ju 88, found it dangerous to operate in daylight. Stukas were relegated to night harassment missions, their airbrakes removed and 20 mm cannon fitted for strafing attacks.

Most Luftwaffe Stuka squadrons were converted to Focke Wulf FW 190 fighter-bombers during 1944-45, but Rudel stayed with his trusted Ju 87G. He was shot down by Soviet flak in February 1945, had his right foot amputated, but was back in action with his die-hard Stukas until the last day of the war in Europe.

STUKA IN OPERATION

Most dive bombers give their pilots the sensation of diving vertically, but the Stuka did genuinely plummet earthwards at a true 90 degree dive angle. Indicator marks on the starboard side of the cockpit side screen ran from 30 to 90 degrees to enable the pilot to judge the angle correctly. From its level flight speed of 255 mph (410 km/h) the Stuka accelerated to 335 mph (540 km/h) as it dived some 4,500 ft (1,370 m). Its maximum permitted speed was 373 mph (600 km/h).

The Stuka's acceleration was progressive, its fixed undercarriage providing additional drag to that provided by the dive brakes. Less awkward

Ju-87 G-1 Stuka

10 (Pz) Staffel, II Gruppe, Schlachtgeschwader 3

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Type: two-seat anti-tank aircraft

Powerplant: one Junkers Jumo 211J-1 in-line 12 cylinder liquid-cooled engine rated at 1059 kW (1,420 hp) at 2,600 rpm (take-off/emergency) and 887 kW (1,190 hp) at 2,400 rpm (max. continuous).

Speed: maximum speed 410 km/h (255 mph) at 3840 m (12,600 ft); maximum cruising speed with bombload or gun pods 310 km/h (193 mph) at 4000 m (13,124 ft); normal cruising speed 190 km/h (118 mph).

Performance: service ceiling 7,290 m (23,915 ft); ceiling with max load

4,730 m (15,520 ft); maximum range 1,535 km (954 miles); normal radius of action 448 km (280 miles).

Weights: Empty equipped 3900 kg (8,598 lb); max take-off 6600 kg (14,551 lb).

Dimensions: Span 15m (49ft 2.5in); length 11.5 m (37 ft 9 in); height 3.88 m (12 ft 9 in); wing area 33.69 m² (343.47 sq ft)

Armament: two BK 37 37-mm cannon in underwing pods; one 7.92-mm MG 81 machine gun flexibly mounted in the rear cockpit; up to 1,800 kg (3,968 lb) of bombs or gun pods for up to 6 machine guns when the BK 37s were not being carried.

Markings

This aircraft is depicted in the summer colours worn by 10.(Pz)/SG 3 at Jakobstadt, Latvia in 1944. In winter the aircraft were whitewashed in a water-soluble white distemper.

Tailplane

Stukas had a two-spar externally-braced tailplane. In early versions there were two bracing struts per side; in the improved Ju 87D and its derivatives, these were cleaned up into a single strut. The elevators were not large, but had enough effect to be able to pull the plane out of a 90 degree dive.

Cockpit

Stukas normally flew with a two-man crew of pilot and radio operator/gunner. The gunner faced to the rear, where he fired the single MG 15 defensive machine gun.

Undercarriage

The sturdy non-retracting main-wheels and struts were shrouded by streamlined fairings and spats. These were often removed in winter, as otherwise mud would quickly clog the wheels.

Wings

The characteristic inverted gull wing of the Stuka was immensely strong, and kept the length of the fixed undercarriage relatively short. Fuel was carried in two large tanks mounted in the inboard wing sections. The gun-equipped Ju 87G did not have dive brakes.

Armament

The massive BK 3.7 cannon were converted Flak 18 3.7-cm anti-aircraft guns. Each gun pod weighed 363 kg, and carried a six-round clip of high-velocity ammunition.





Stuka Variants

- Ju 87A-0** pre-production aircraft
- Ju 87A-1** production version 1937
- Ju 87A-2** introduced Jumo 210 supercharged engine
- Ju 87B-0** pre-production series of re-designed Ju 87B
- Ju 87B-1** standard version 1939, introduced 1,200 hp Jumo 211
- Ju 87B-2** improved version, available with ski or tropical fits; supplied to Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania.
- Ju 87R1-4** anti-ship versions of Ju 87B-1 with provision for drop tanks but armed with only one 260 kg (551 lb) bomb
- Ju 87C** carrier version for Graf Zeppelin (also recorded as Ju 87T)
- Ju 87D-1** introduced revised layout, new canopy and uprated 1,410 hp Jumo engine
- Ju 87D-2** glider tug version, used in North Africa
- Ju 87D-3** additional armour plating
- Ju 87D-4** equipped to carry a torpedo
- Ju 87D-5** level attack version: no divebrake but extended wings
- Ju 87D-7** night intruder with no dive brakes, flame-dampened exhausts, night flying equipment and twin 20 mm cannon
- Ju 87D-8** definitive production version of Ju 87D-7
- Ju 87G-1** anti-armour version of Ju 87D-5, armed with twin 37 mm cannon
- Ju 87H** Ju 87D trainer

Total Ju 87 production	
1938-9	336
1940	611
1941	476
1942	917
1943	1,844
1944	909



Junkers Ju 87B-1

Possibly the first 'B' model Stuka to drop bombs in anger, this early aircraft served with the Condor Legion staffel 'Jolanthe'. The unit, named after a pig in a Berlin comedy, was formed by members of one of the first operational Stuka Geschwader, StG 163.



Ju 87D-1/Trop

Shown carrying a single SC1000 (1000-kg) bomb, this aircraft shows the more aerodynamically refined fuselage and cockpit which distinguish the 'D' model Stuka from its predecessors. S7 + KS is marked in the colours of 8 Staffel, Stukageschwader 3 based at Derna in Libya in June 1942, but it was actually the personal aircraft of Oberstleutnant Walther Siegel, the Geschwaderkommandore.

dive bombers such as the Douglas Dauntless accelerated like a rocket when they dived with a full bombload. It was this ability to make such a controlled vertical dive that enabled the Stuka to deliver heavy bombs with greater precision than any other aircraft of the war.

As he dived, the pilot kept an eye on the contact altimeter. It had an indicator which lit up when it was time to initiate the automatic pull-out. This brought the Stuka back to level flight at 6g (six times the force of gravity), descending another 1,475 ft (450 m) in the process.

The control column had a safety device, limiting it to 5 degrees of movement from neutral, stopping the pilot from pulling too much g during a pull-out. This could be overridden in an emergency – a hard tug on the control column brought the Stuka out of its dive. The minimum authorised altitude for starting a dive bombing attack was 800 m (2,624 ft): a lower cloud base restricted the Ju 87 to level attacks.

BOMBLOAD

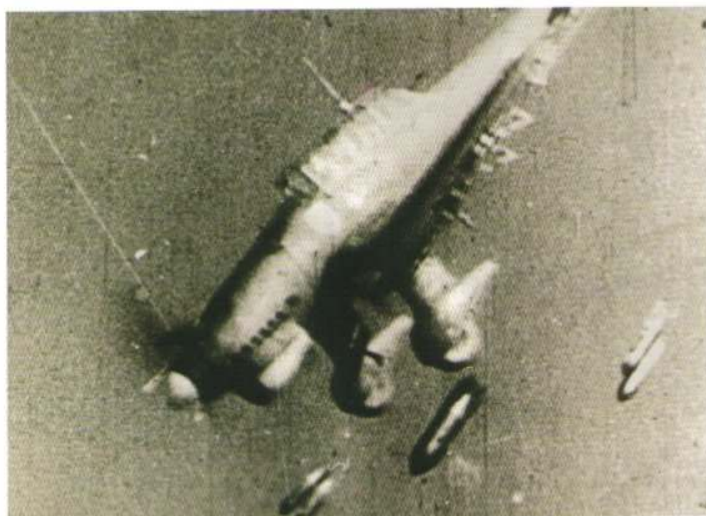
If a target was close enough, the Stuka could deliver a formidable bombload. The Ju 87 could carry a 1,800 kg (3,968 lb) bomb for a short range mission: the sort of bombload carried by twin-engined aircraft throughout

Left: The Stuka's normal load was a 1,000 kg (2,205 lb) bomb beneath the fuselage or a 500 kg (1,102 lb) bomb under the fuselage and four 50 kg (110 lb) bombs under the wings.

World War II, and not far off that carried by American four-engine bombers during the strategic bombing of Germany.

Combat experience in Russia demonstrated that hitting a tank with a heavy bomb was next to impossible, even for a Stuka. On the Russian front, the standard anti-tank weapon was the SD-4-H1, a 4 kg hollow-charge bomblet. Seventy eight were carried inside a 500 kg bomb case. The bomblets could penetrate the thin top armour of any Allied tank – even the massive JS-2s used by the Red Army's in 1945.

More spectacular, but fraught with danger for the aircrew, was one of the final Stuka models: the Ju 87G-1. Introduced in 1943, this carried a pair of 37-mm cannon which could also penetrate the top armour of a tank, but the weight and drag further reduced the Stuka's already marginal performance.



Anatomy of the Ju87 Stuka

The Ju 87 was not fast, nor was it pretty. But it was very good at the job for which it was designed: diving vertically down on an enemy and delivering heavy bombs with great accuracy.

Tail wheel: Although free to swivel on the ground, the tail-wheel is locked into a fore-and-aft position on take-off and landing.

Markings: This Stuka is marked as an aircraft of StG 2 in use during the Battle of Britain.

Controls: The Stuka was fitted with double-wing flaps and ailerons. A classic design which had been patented by Junkers, this used the outboard section as ailerons for roll control, with the two inner sections being used as flaps.

Dive brakes: Opening the dive brakes automatically sent the Ju 87 into its dive.

Right: During a dive, the pilot safety mechanism restricted stick movement to 5 degrees to avoid inducing excess g-forces in the pull-up. In emergencies this could be overridden by a 27-kg (60-lb) pull on the stick.

Machine gun: The single MG 15 7.92-mm machine gun was hopelessly inadequate as a defence against fighters attacking from behind.



Dive angle: Pilots kept track of the angle at which they were diving by means of red lines painted on the canopy, which they would line up with the horizon.

Structure: The Stuka was designed to stand up to the incredible stresses generated by repeated 6g pull-outs from vertical dives. However, building such strength made the Ju 87 heavy, and its performance was poor.

Dive bombing techniques

Pre-dive checklist:

1. Landing flaps at cruise position
2. Elevator trim at cruise position
3. Rudder trim at cruise position
4. Airscrew pitch set at cruise
5. Contact altimeter on
6. Contact altimeter set to release height
7. Supercharger set to automatic
8. Throttle pulled right back
9. Cooler flaps closed
10. Dive brakes opened

Pullout mechanism:

Automatically initiates a 6g pullout, returning elevator trim tabs to normal position. Can be overridden by the pilot in emergency. Once nose is above horizon, dive brakes retract, throttle opens and airscrew is set to climb.

Bomb release: A light on the contact altimeter comes on to indicate the bomb-release point – usually at a minimum height of 450m. A knob is depressed on the control column to release weapons and to initiate the automatic pull-out mechanism.

Dive brakes open:

This automatically noses the aircraft over into a dive. Red tabs protrude from the upper surfaces of the wing as a visual indicator to the pilot: at the same time the automatic dive recovery system is actuated. The pilot aims the entire aircraft at his target using a simple gun-type sight. Maximum dive speed is around 600 km/h (373 mph).

Undercarriage: The origins of the Stuka design dates back to the early 1930s, when a fixed undercarriage was not seen as a disadvantage. By the time war broke out, however it was a distinctly old-fashioned feature.

Weapons: Stukas existed to deliver bombs, and they could deliver them accurately. Most level bombers of the day were very lucky if they could hit within 100 metres of a target – in good hands a Stuka could hit to within 10 metres.

Radiator: Cooling was provided by a radiator carried in an armoured 'bath-tub' mounted beneath the engine.

Engine: The Ju 87B was powered by a 12-cylinder liquid-cooled Junkers Jumo 211 engine. This delivered 900 kW (1,200hp) at 2,400 rpm for take off, with a normal maximum power of 825 kW (1,100 hp) at 1500 m (4,920 ft).



HITLER JUGEND

THE HITLER Youth was founded in 1926 by Kurt Gruber. A branch of the SA, it was originally known as the Youth League of the NSDAP, and its formation reflected the popularity of youth movements all over Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. It received official party recognition at the 1926 Reich Party Congress, and it was there that Julius Streicher coined the name *Hitlerjugend*, often abbreviated HJ.

In 1931, the 24-year-old Baldur von Schirach was appointed its leader, and in 1933 it absorbed all other youth movements in Germany. The only exceptions were a number of Catholic groups, which were banned in 1936. In April 1939, a *Jugenddienstverordnung* or 'Youth Service Order' made

From tiny beginnings in 1926, the Hitler Youth grew with the Nazi party to become the dominant organisation for German children and teenagers.

Below right: The Bund deutscher Mädel – League of German Girls – was the female equivalent to the Hitler Youth.

Right: One of the most evocative of all images of the Hitler Youth is that of a trumpeter sounding a fanfare at party occasions.

Below: The 'youth' days at the annual Nuremberg rallies were amongst the most enthusiastically attended of all. Youth was important to Hitler and the Nazis – if you catch them young and impressionable, you have a convert for life.



membership in the HJ compulsory for all German girls and boys. At its height, the movement numbered more than 3.5 million members.

ENTRY INTO THE HJ

Initially, boys and girls aged between 10 and 14 entered the *Jungvolk* or *Jungmadel*. A boy entering the *Jungvolk* was known as a *Pimpf*, and had to pass an entrance test which included reciting the 'Horst Wessel' song and running 50 metres in 12 seconds. Activities included two-day cross-country hikes, practising semaphore and learning arms drill.

At 14, girls moved on to the *Bund Deutscher Mädel*. Though girls also undertook long marches and went on camps, the main emphasis of their training was on domestic or farm work. Suitably 'Nordic' girls from Holland, Flanders, Norway and Denmark were also eligible for such *landdienst* or land service.

At 15, boys entered the HJ proper. There they undertook training that would prepare them



Above: The coloured band on the first pattern Hitler Jugend peaked cap matched the piping on the shoulder patches, and indicated the *Bann* or *Oberbann* to which the member belonged. The belt buckle carried the Hitler Youth motto – Blut und Ehre (Blood and Honour).

Below: A collection of certificates awarded to a Hitler Youth member very late in the war. The central piece is the Oath of Allegiance to the Führer, taken by every member of the Hitler Youth as he made the transition from the *Deutsche Jungvolk* at the age of 14.





for military service. They were taught to drive, to fly gliders, to handle small craft, to shoot, and were trained in small unit tactics.

With the outbreak of war older HJ members were drafted into fire fighting and air raid protection duties, freeing adults for military service. By the end of September 1939 more than a million *Hitlerjugend* were helping with the war effort. Most of the HJ leaders joined the fighting services – Baldur von Schirach entering the army's elite *Grossdeutschland* infantry regiment.

BOYS INTO BATTLE

From 1943, with the war turning against Germany, the HJ entered combat – primarily crewing anti-aircraft guns. However, the most radical move came when 17- and 18-year olds were given the opportunity to serve in the 12th SS Panzer Division *Hitlerjugend*. The division fought fanatically in Normandy, suffering 60% killed,

Above: Military training was a key part of the HJ's activities. The boys were introduced to it young: these are 11- and 12-year old pimps of the Jungvolk.

wounded or missing in under a month.

By the end of the war girls from the BdM were serving in Flak units, and some fought as anti-tank gunners outside Vienna. Others took part in the fierce but hopeless defence of Berlin against the Russians. Indeed, the Hitler Youth figured largely in the last occasion Hitler was seen in public. On April 20 1945 – the Führer's birthday – he emerged from the Führerbunker to present Iron Crosses to a group of 14-year-old HJ boys. Then he went back underground, never to see the light of day again.

Below: Any innocence which the Hitlerjugend may have had was lost in the fires of war. By the end of the conflict HJ members were manning anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, fighting on all fronts.



CHILDREN OF THE REICH

The HJ and the BdM had their own distinctive uniforms and insignia. Girls wore short brown jackets, full-length black skirts, white blouses and neckerchiefs, white socks and black shoes. Boys wore brown shirts and shorts with black neckerchief and a black belt with cross strap.

The HJ swastika appeared inside a white diamond with red tips at top and bottom. On armbands this appeared on a white diamond, with a narrow white bar running through the centre of the red band. Epaulets and a triangular badge sewn onto the left sleeve indicated to which HJ

region the wearer belonged. The lower sleeve also carried badges indicating skills and qualifications. Adult leaders wore a single-breasted, four-pocketed mustard-coloured tunic with black trousers and peaked cap. The swastika also appeared on the handle of an HJ member's most treasured possession, his dagger. The bayonet-style sheathe knife bore the motto *Blut und Ehre* – 'Blood and Honour'. With over 20,000,000 being manufactured, more Hitler Youth daggers were made than any other edged weapon of the Nazi period.

Below: The uniform of a Hitler Youth Gebietsführer (Regional Leader) from Bavaria. The extra gold piping under the triangular unit badge indicates a 'Tradition Unit', which had been in existence since before 1933. The two pocket insignia are the War Merit cross and the





Above: The bayonet-style knife was very much a symbol of the Hitler Jugend. It had an immense symbolic and psychological significance – only specially selected adults were allowed to carry such weapons, whereas every member of the HJ was issued with one.

Below: The Hitler Youth used two patterns of shoulder straps. The first pattern, issued from around 1933 to 1938, had coloured piping indicating their Bann or unit and also carried rank insignia. Second pattern straps (1938-1945) were generally black, or dark blue for members of the Marine-HJ.

Below: The triangular patches worn by HJ members on their upper right sleeves usually showed the wearer's Obergebiet or main administrative district – Nord, Süd, Ost, West or Mitte. The second line referred to his Gebiet or home district. Children of German parentage living abroad were encouraged to join the HJ, and wore appropriate triangles. The special green Landjahr sleeve badge was worn by HJ members who had completed a year as a volunteer worker on the land. The 'S' rune on the right indicates that the wearer was a member of the Deutsche Jungvolk, the junior HJ.



A Z



OF THE THIRD REICH

Blood Purge (Night of the Long Knives)

Night of murder which consolidated Adolf Hitler's rise to power. Hitler's major rival in the Nazi leadership was Ernst Röhm, head of the SA.

The SA leadership was against the 'old order', and had upset three groups which Hitler needed: its violent radicalism offended the Führer's conservative supporters, Röhm's desire to disband the army and absorb it into the SA offended the generals, and his increasing power on the streets worried Nazi rivals like Goering, Goebbels and Himmler.

Hitler decided to resolve his differences by eliminating the SA's leadership. On the night of

30 June 1934, Hitler unleashed the SS and the Gestapo, arresting or murdering SA leaders all over Germany. A number of private scores were settled at the same time. Estimates on the number killed range as high as 1,000, with 70 or 80 senior SA commanders being executed or 'shot while resisting arrest'.

Right: Hitler confers with Ernst Röhm – one of his few friends and soon to be one of his many victims – a few months before the 'Night of the Long Knives'.

See also Inside the Third Reich

Issue 4: Röhm purge

Issue 5: Rise of the SA



Blutfahne (Blood Banner)

Probably the most revered symbol in the Third Reich, the *Blutfahne* was the flag used during the Munich Putsch of 1923. Carried by Heinrich Trambauer as the Nazis clashed with state police in Odeon Square, it was spattered with the blood of Andreas Bauriedl, who was one of 16 men killed during the rising.

Regarded as a holy relic, it was placed in the keeping of the SS in 1926, where Jakob Grimminger was appointed standard bearer. Grimminger was a veteran of both World War I and of street

fight with the communists, and would remain in his position until the flag disappeared at the end of the war. The *Blutfahne* was displayed at major Nazi ceremonies, the most prominent of which was the 'consecration' of the *Feldzeichen*, or banners of newly-formed SS *Standarten* which took place at the annual Nuremberg party rallies.

Hitler holds the Blutfahne as he consecrates Nazi banners at Nuremberg. Jakob Grimminger was the flag's standard bearer to the end of the war.



Bock, Fedor von (1880-1945)

A fanatical career soldier of the old school, one of the most senior generals in the German army at the outbreak of war. He commanded the German forces which occupied Austria, Army Group North during the invasion of Poland, and Army Group B in Holland, Belgium and France.

Promoted Field Marshal in July 1940, he was given command of the powerful Army Group Centre in the 1941 invasion of Russia. Failing to capture Moscow as winter set in with its full fury, he fell ill, and was finally sacked in 1942. He died in an air raid at the end of the war.

Fedor von Bock fell out of favour with the Führer during the 1942 summer campaign in Russia. He may have had some contact with the anti-Hitler conspiracy which resulted in the bomb plot of July 1944 – certainly many of those most involved had been on his staff in Russia.



Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (1906-1945)

Evangelical pastor, theologian and writer who led attempts to free the church from Nazi interference before the war.

Actively opposed to Hitler, he helped Jews escape to Switzerland. In 1942 he had clandestine contact with allied

representatives in Sweden, soliciting aid for the German opposition movement. Arrested by the Gestapo in 1943, he was

sent to a concentration camp and executed by the SS just before the end of the war.

Bormann, Martin (1900-1945)

One of the most sinister figures to emerge from the murky depths of the Nazi party, Bormann became Hitler's private secretary after the flight of Rudolf Hess to Britain in May 1941. He was able to exercise considerable influence by playing on Hitler's foibles as he became more unbalanced, and by controlling access to the Führer.

He remained in the bunker to the end, living in a fantasy world where he continued a long-standing feud with Goebbels and making sure that the Führer got

to hear of the 'betrayals' by the absent Goering and Himmler. Bormann witnessed Hitler's marriage and last testament. After the Führer's suicide he attempted to escape into the chaos as the Soviets overran Berlin, and disappeared.

Rumours abounded that he fled to South America, but human remains found on a Berlin building site in 1972 were tentatively identified with Bormann. A crushed poison capsule between the teeth indicated that these were no

ordinary bones: they were close to where he had last been seen alive, and they matched Bormann's physical characteristics. In 1998 the identification was confirmed by matching DNA from the remains with samples from Bormann's children.

Likened to an 'over-sexed toad' by Magda Goebbels, Martin Bormann used his position close to the Führer to become one of the most powerful men in the Third Reich.



Brauchitsch, Walther von (1881-1948)

From a line of professional soldiers, Walther von Brauchitsch succeeded General Wernher von Fritsch as commander-in-chief of the army in 1938. Von Brauchitsch was not a powerful character, and deferred to Hitler who had appointed himself supreme commander of the armed forces at the same time.

Although promoted to Field

Marshal after the successful campaigns in Poland and France, he opposed Hitler's broad-front strategy in Russia, feeling that a drive on Moscow would be more effective. However, he could not stand up to Hitler, and when heart problems ruined his health late in 1941 he was relieved. He was not replaced, Hitler taking upon himself the responsibility as

head of the German Army. Brauchitsch died of a heart attack while awaiting trial after the war.

Von Brauchitsch was a capable professional soldier. He rose to the highest position in the German army, but unlike his predecessors he lacked the willpower to oppose Hitler.



Braun, Eva (1912 - 1945)

Hitler's mistress for twelve years, and his wife for one day before their joint suicide in the Führerbunker in Berlin in 1945. Eva Braun first met Hitler in Munich while he was still involved with his niece Geli, and she was working for Heinrich Hoffmann, the Führer's personal photographer.

She was never seen in public with Hitler, who felt that a consort would detract from his appeal to German women. Never involved

or even interested in politics, she stayed out of the limelight, enjoying a private but privileged life style at Berchtesgaden, which allowed her to follow her enthusiasms for swimming, skiing and gymnastics.

Very few Germans knew about Eva Braun in her lifetime. She had met Hitler in 1929, and moved into his flat in 1931 after the death of Geli Raubal.



Braun, Wernher Freiherr von (1912 - 1977)

Pioneering rocket scientist. Born in Prussia, he studied at the Charlottenberg Institute of Technology, and at the age of 20 was engaged by the German Army to conduct research into rocket designs.

In 1937, at the age of 25, he became technical director of the German army's rocket research establishment at Peenemünde on the Baltic. Von Braun was the driving force behind the A4 or V2 rocket which became the world's first operational ballistic missile.

In spite of being implicated in the use of slave labour to build his rockets, he moved to the United States after the war where he played a key part in the American moon programme.

Wernher von Braun (right) is welcomed back to Germany by Bavarian conservative Franz Josef Strauss. By this time - 1959 - any taint from his wartime activities had been submerged in the work he was doing for America's space programme.



Braunes Haus (Brown House)

In its early days, the Nazi party met at various Munich beer halls, with a modest party headquarters at *Sternacker-Brau* in Munich which had been opened in 1920. Although the party went into decline in the mid-1920s, massive growth in the size of the Nazi movement in the late 1920s and early 1930s meant that the party needed a new home. From 1931 the headquarters of the Reich leadership of the NSDAP was at the *Braunes Haus* or Brown House.

Located on Briennerstrasse 45 in Munich, it had formerly been an old patrician mansion called Barlow Palace. However, in spite

of the prevailing economic hardship, (and some opposition to such extravagance from within the NSDAP) Hitler easily found the money to expensively convert and remodel the building into offices. The work was done under the direction of Professor Paul Ludwig Troost, Hitler's favourite architect.

Right: Located in a prosperous part of Munich, the Braunes Haus was a converted mansion. It was a far cry from the small and shabby offices in beer halls which had served as NSDAP headquarters until 1931.



Buchenwald

Located about eight kilometres north-east of Weimar in central Germany, the concentration camp at Buchenwald was established in 1937. Most early inmates were political prisoners, though more than 10,000 Jews were locked up after the *Kristallnacht* pogrom of 1938. Buchenwald expanded during the war, having a prisoner population of at least 80,000 by the end of 1944. Buchenwald was the heart of a complex of more than 100 slave labour camps, and was also the scene of extensive medical experimentation.

As the Red Army swept over Eastern Europe, prisoners were evacuated from other camps into Buchenwald, many dying on the death marches. Though not an extermination camp, Buchenwald had a high mortality rate, with prisoners overcrowded, undernourished, over-worked and

subject to severe ill-treatment. Although the SS tried to evacuate the camp at the end of the war, 30,000 being moved (and 8,000 dying in the process) more than 20,000 prisoners were still on site when Buchenwald was liberated by the US 80th Infantry Division, on April 10, 1945.

See also The Holocaust
Issue 1: Auschwitz selection
Issue 2: The Body Factory
See also Nazi Horrors
Issue 3: Dachau

One of the largest of all the Nazi concentration camps, Buchenwald provided slave labour for dozens of German companies involved in armaments production.



Bund Deutscher Mädchen (BdM)

The League of German Girls was the Nazi youth movement for girls – the female equivalent to the Hitler Youth. It had two age groups, the *Jungmädel* aged between 10 and 14, and the BdM proper for older girls to 21.

BdM girls were expected to live up to a strict 19th century romantic ideal of womanhood. It was very much a country rather than an urban ideal – girls who permed their hair instead of tying it in braids or 'Gretchen' wreaths could have their heads ritually shaved as punishment.

Although training emphasised fitness and comradeship like their

male counterparts, much of the BdM's work involved preparation for marriage. At 17, girls were eligible to join the organisation called *Glaube und Schönheit* – Faith and Beauty – which gave them advanced education in domestic science and preparation for marriage. By 1936 more than two million girls were enrolled in the BdM.

The League of German Girls placed great stress on 'journeys' – long weekend hikes, either camping out or staying in youth hostels, where they were expected to help with the chores.



'Canada'

The nickname given by inmates for the massive stores of goods, clothing, valuables, jewellery, dental gold and even hair looted from transportees arriving at Auschwitz. Canada was a faraway country where people could live freely, and was a hoped-for destination for many political refugees in the late 1930s.

The name given to the buildings and depots where these valuables were stored reflected the fact that the squads of *kapos*, or working inmates, who gathered the loot had access to better food and superior living conditions than other camp labourers. However the comparatively pleasant life would not last long – the kapo squads were regularly exterminated and replaced new squads.

In February 1943 Oswald Pohl, chief of the SS *Wirtschafts- und*

verwaltungshauptamt (Economic and Administrative Central Office) reported that 781 wagon loads of loot had left Auschwitz for Germany. Of these, 254 were filled with clothing and one with varied human hair. Gold ingots made from jewellery were held in the Reichsbank in a huge deposit in the name of Max Heiliger.

See also The holocaust

Issue 1: Selected to die

Issue 2: Death factory

Possessions looted from deportees to Auschwitz are unloaded in 'Canada'. The sorting was done by special teams of inmates who were themselves replaced and gassed after a few weeks of work.



Canaris, Admiral Wilhelm Franz (1887-1945)

The director of the Abwehr, the counter intelligence department of the OKW (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*, the Armed Forces High Command). As an officer in the Imperial Navy he undertook secret operations in World War I, and he built the Abwehr into a major intelligence body.

Canaris maintained social relations with members of the SS and SD intelligence bodies, and was at pains to protect members of the Abwehr from these rival organisations. He gradually became an opponent of Hitler

and joined the Resistance, but opposed any assassination attempt. The double life wore him down and he was dismissed in February 1944. Arrested after the July Plot, Canaris was hanged in Flossenburg concentration camp on April 9, 1945.

Canaris attends a function at the General Staff Academy before the war. He is flanked by a Luftwaffe officer and his sometime naval protégé and rival intelligence chief, Reinhard Heydrich of the Sicherheitsdienst.



'Canned goods'

The code name for a series of fake attacks on German border posts which were fabricated in August 1939 to justify the German attack on Poland a month later. Conceived by Himmler, Heydrich and Heinrich

Müller, and initiated with Hitler's approval, the operation took about a dozen condemned German criminals and camp inmates who were dressed in Polish uniforms, given lethal injections and then torn apart by

small arms fire. The international press were then invited to view the bodies which had been positioned to look as if they had been killed in a cross border raid. The most important 'target' for these attacks was the radio

station at Gleiwitz where SS troops under command of Alfred Helmut Naujocks added to the effect by storming the radio station, beating up the staff and making crude anti-German broadcasts.

Chamberlain, Houston S. (1855-1927)

British-born political philosopher whose book *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* was published in Germany in 1899. In it, he saw the Germans as a future master race and the Jews as a 'low civilisation'.

Born in 1855, Houston Stewart Chamberlain worshiped the music of Richard Wagner. He

settled in Bayreuth, becoming a naturalised German and marrying Eva, the composer's daughter.

His views greatly influenced the *volkisch* racist groups who dominated the early incarnations of the Nazi party. Adolf Hitler respected Chamberlain and was one of the few public figures who attended his funeral.

One of the ideological forebears of national socialism, British-born Houston Stewart Chamberlain was a naturalised German. His ideas on race and the manifest destiny of the Germanic peoples to rule Europe – if not the world – had a great influence on Adolf Hitler and the early Nazis.



Chamberlain, Neville (1869-1940)

British Conservative politician, Prime Minister from 1937, whose policy of appeasement allowed Hitler to annex Austria, the Sudetenland and Czechoslovakia.

Though excoriated as the man who returned from Munich waving a piece of paper signed by Hitler and announcing 'peace in our time', he was a man whose desire for peace did not allow him to see that Hitler was not to

be trusted. Nevertheless, it was under Chamberlain that Britain began the preparations for war.

In the 12 months between the meeting in Munich in 1938 and declaration of war in September 1939, work on rearmament and the construction of munitions factories went into high gear as Britain was readied for war. Chamberlain was forced from office after the German attack in

the West in the spring of 1940, and died soon after handing power to Winston Churchill.

Neville Chamberlain shakes hands with Hitler at the Munich meeting in 1938. A well-meaning if ineffectual politician, the British Prime Minister's main failure was that he took the German Führer to be a man of his word



Channel Islands

The only part of the British Isles to be occupied by the Nazis. Hitler's fascination with their defences led to extensive work being undertaken by slave labourers. On Alderney, a small concentration camp run by the SS housed about 1,000 French Jews who were used in this work.

Between July 1940 and December 1943, the British mounted seven Commando raids

on the islands, but they were not taken until the end of the war. Indeed, in March 1945 the German garrison raided France and attacked an American HQ at Granville on the Cotentin peninsula.

Right: A British policeman gives directions to Luftwaffe troops on exercise. During the war, this scene could only have taken place on the Channel Islands.



Chelmno (Kulmhof)

The first extermination camp, set up in the Warthegau – an area of Poland annexed to Germany. It was initially a local operation set up by *Reichsstatthalter* (Governor) Arthur Greiser and staffed by police units. It operated for about a year under Commandant Lange.

Inmates, who were largely ill or infirm, were gassed in small groups in the backs of sealed vans into which engine exhaust was directed. The remains were disposed of in a *Knochenmühle* (bone crushing machine). Around 150,000 people died in the camp's year of operation. Because they

were deemed to run a risk of infection, the guards received a bonus of 15 Reichsmarks per day.

On Himmler's orders the camp was closed in the summer of 1942; a special SS commando dynamited the buildings and removed any traces of the mass graves.

See also The holocaust
Issue 1: Selected to die
Issue 2: Death factory
See also Nazi Horrors
Issue 3: Dachau

Citadel (Zitadelle)

Code name for the German attack on the Soviet salient at Kursk in July 1943, one of the largest set-piece battles in history. Nearly one million German soldiers, 2,500 tanks and 1,800 combat aircraft were launched in an all-out attack to destroy two Soviet army groups. However, they met with an even greater number of Soviet defenders in prepared positions: the complete German plan had been passed to the Soviet Union by the West who knew of it through Ultra radio intercepts. The Soviet defences blunted the attack, and then after a week the Red Army moved

onto the offensive. After Kursk the Germans never again held the strategic initiative in Russia.

Right: German panzergrenadiers wait for the word to move forward. Hitler's delays in authorising the attack gave the Soviets time to prepare defences.



Right: Bands of Soviet partisans roamed the German rear areas, gathering vital information on the Wehrmacht build-up before Kursk.



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HITLER'S WAR MACHINE

Junkers Ju 87 Stuka
MG 42 Machine Gun
Assault Artillery

NAZI HORRORS

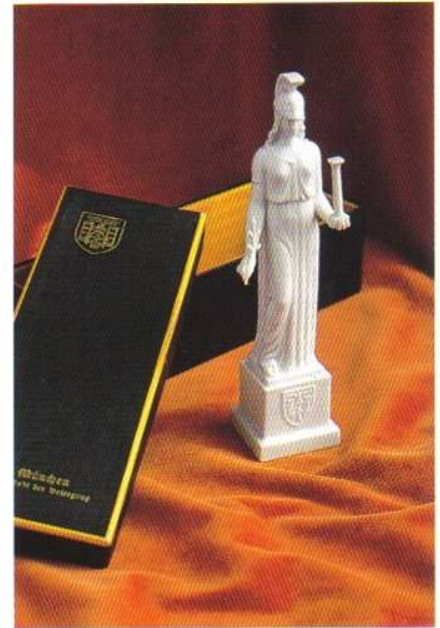
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